

Paris asks French nationals to leave Algeria after killings

PARIS (Agencies) — France has called on its nationals in Algeria to leave the country after a French monk and a nun were gunned down in an Algiers marketplace.

The foreign ministry called the shootings an "odious crime" after 64-year-old Father Henri-Barthelemy Verges and Sister Paule-Helene Saint-Raymond, 67, became the latest victims of a wave of killings in the country.

The two worked as librarians in a student library.

The ministry statement advised all French nationals whose presence in Algeria was not indispensable "to take the necessary measures to return to France" following the latest "act of barbarism."

The clerics' assassins managed to escape after the shooting in the strongly pro-Islamic Casbah part of Algiers' old quarter.

The killings came on a day when some 20,000 people marched through the streets of Algiers to call for national reconciliation.

Members of the banned Islamic Salvation Front FIS refused to join in the march, as the radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA) threatened to kill any Islamists who opened a dialogue with the Algerian authorities.

Sunday's killings brought to 34 the number of foreigners assassinated in Algeria since Islamic militants last year warned non-Algerians to leave the country or face death. Ten of those killed were from former colonial power France.

The latest victims were the first clerics to die in the unrest, which began with the cancellation by the army of elections in January 1992, which the FIS appeared poised to win.

Officials meanwhile revealed 15 militants had been killed by security forces between Monday and Saturday in various regions of Algeria, eight of them in Algiers itself. Weapons were also recovered.

The wave of killings has prompted an exodus of French nationals but many longstanding residents have remained in Algeria, which gained independence from France in 1962.

A foreign ministry spokesman was unable to say how many French citizens were still there.

The ministry said France's ambassador to Algiers was in contact with the Algerian authorities to express France's "serious concern" and to assess the situation.

A group suspected of being a front for supporters of Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) denounced the killing of the two French religious workers.

The Algerian Fraternity in France (FAF) said in a statement that it "condemned the double killing of two religious workers... which is no doubt the work of enemies of Algeria."

The FAF's president, Djafar Al Houari, was detained last November in a police roundup of 75 suspected militants and placed under house arrest in southwest France.

Police said the FAF was a front for supporters of the FIS.

Thousands of demonstrators, many of them veiled women and Muslim moderates, marched Sunday for peace talks and an end to a bloody insurgency by Islamic fundamentalists.

"Dialogue and an end to the flow of blood," read one banner in the procession in Algiers of about 12,000 people, twice that according to organisers.

An open letter to President Liamine Zerrouk, read to the crowd, called for dialogue with all parties.

The march for national reconciliation, heavily guarded by police, was among several in cities across Algeria that were organised by four parties and 30 associations of moderate Muslims.

In Algiers about 500 women in veils joined with women in Western dress, ululating and waving roses along the three-kilometre route from May 1 Square to the Martyrs' Square.

The protest, however, was far smaller than the 100,000 predicted by organisers, who included the long-ruling National Liberation Front.

An estimated 4,000 people have been killed in the insurgency since the military-backed government cancelled January 1992 runoff elections the FIS was expected to win.

Votes had favoured the front as a way to unseat the National Liberation Front, accused of corruption and mismanagement since Algeria's independence from France in 1962.

The government has refused to talk with leaders who do not renounce violence but has been speaking with moderate members of the FIS.

Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi reiterated that position Saturday night and said he saw a return "as soon as possible" to the electoral process.

"Elections are the result of political dialogue," which he said "is open to all parties that respect the constitution."

No incidents were reported during Sunday's march in Algiers, but extremists had already cast a shadow on it.

On Tuesday an organiser was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen. Abdul Kader Kessal was a leading member of an association for children of veterans from Algeria's 1954-62 war for independence from France.

He returned Thursday, part of a 20-man vanguard of the Palestinian police force that is to bring law and order to the unruly streets of the Gaza Strip. Hundreds of police still in Egypt, Jordan and Iraq will take up their posts soon.

Gen. Awad said his first encounter with Israeli officers who came to greet the Palesti-

Israel letting PLO make Jerusalem capital — Olmert

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Rightist mayor Ehud Olmert marked 27 years of Israeli occupation over the holy city's Arab half on Monday by saying Israel is letting the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) turn East Jerusalem into the capital of a future Palestinian state.

In an interview on the anniversary of East Jerusalem's seizure according to the Jewish calendar, Mr. Olmert told Davar daily:

"The government is in fact reconciling itself to a reality in which (East) Jerusalem has turned into a kind of capital city for a Palestinian entity that is forming itself into a state."

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in remarks broadcast by Israel Radio on Monday, said he would not "divide" Jerusalem.

"I would see Jerusalem united under Israeli sovereignty as Israel's capital for as long as man can foresee."

The future of Jerusalem, and a furiously-paced Jewish settlement programme ringing the city, are among the most volatile issues underlying Israeli-PLO peace talks.

The sides agreed to postpone discussions on the city, all of which Israel claims as its "eternal capital" to enable agreement on other, less sensitive issues.

Mr. Olmert, who trounced dovish Teddy Kollek in elections last year, opposes any "concessions" to Palestinians, who make up about 150,000 of the city's 530,000 residents.

"The PLO is turning East Jerusalem into a capital city that supplies central services and in which central institutions are operating," he said.

"I don't know why the government let's this go on."

East Jerusalem, the economic, cultural, and religious hub of the occupied territories, is the base of major Palestinian political and social welfare institutions.

Though Mr. Rabin opposes Palestinian statehood, some ministers in his centre-left government back the idea as inevitable.

Mr. Olmert said the government, which signed an agreement last week in Cairo implementing Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho, was afraid to block PLO moves towards sovereignty.

"The government is afraid to prevent these steps, fearing it will cast a shadow over the agreement with Arafat," Mr. Olmert said.

Washington, which helped push Israel and the PLO to clinch their peace deal, protested to Israel in December over feverish Jewish home building in East Jerusalem.

Mr. Olmert at the time said Israel's chief ally should mind its own business.

In March 1993, reacting to a spate of guerrilla attacks, Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip, effectively cutting off East Jerusalem from the occupied territories.

The closure relaxed somewhat over the last year but on April 7 Israel tightened it after a suicide bomber killed eight Israelis in Afula town.

The closures, and self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, have sharpened Palestinian demands for a change in the city's status.

Leading Palestinians in the territories even said PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat should not sign the Cairo agreement until Israel stopped building in occupied territories.

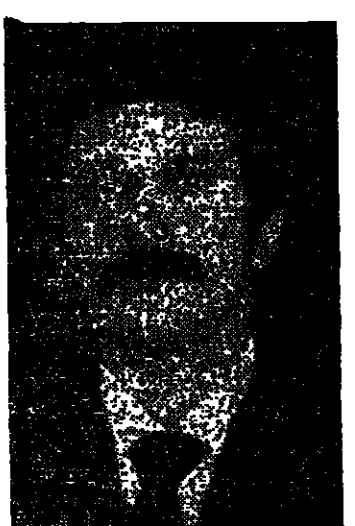
Arab merchants kept their shops shut as Palestinians held a general strike to mark the monthly anniversary of the start of their revolt against Israeli rule in the occupied territories. It began Dec. 9, 1987.

Thousands of Jewish settlers were scheduled to march along the city's main Jaffa road to the western wall late Monday for a fireworks celebration.

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Saleh may win battle, but not the war

By Youssef Azmeh
Reuters



Ali Abdullah Saleh

DUBAI — President Ali Abdullah Saleh's more numerous northern Yemeni forces may gain the upper hand in his battle to subdue southerners who challenged his rule, experts and diplomats say.

"But this is a far cry from winning the war," a Western diplomat said.

The diplomats said Mr. Saleh's all-out bid to oust the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) that ruled South Yemen Soviet-style until it merged with the north four years ago came as no surprise after months of bickering and military skirmishes.

"He comes from a long line of military leaders who find it intolerable to share power with anyone, let alone a party they detest at heart," one diplomat said of the former army colonel's experiment of power-sharing with the YSP after ruling the north single-handed for 13 years.

Diplomats said foreign governments had warned Mr. Saleh he would have a tough fight on his hands if he tried to use force against the YSP, but the Yemeni leader would not heed their warning.

This view was reinforced by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau on Sunday.

"There is not a military

solution to the Yemen problem. It may be that after another brief period, when the leaders, particularly the northern leaders, realise there's not an easy victory, they will hear the words of the... world," he said.

Mr. Saleh and the southern leader, Ali Salem Al Beidh, merged North and South Yemen in May 1990 in what many Yemenis hailed as a model of selfless idealism by enemies-turned-friends.

After years of tension between the two neighbours, including a border war in the 1970s and involvement by both sides in assassinations of each other's leaders, they agreed to share power 50-50

in a unified republic.

"It was a marriage of convenience," one diplomat said.

"The south wanted to end its isolation as its close ally the Soviet Union started to disintegrate..."

"Saleh became president of all Yemen, the north had access to the skills of southern technocrats, and the two could jointly exploit potentially rich oil reserves," he added.

Mr. Saleh was admired for tactical skills as he smoothed over early problems of bringing together a deeply-conservative tribal north and relatively urbanised and disciplined south.

Mr. Beidh did not appear too unhappy as deputy to Mr. Saleh as long as he and his former Marxist party were left in effective control of the south, very much the junior partner accounting for 2.4 million of Yemen's 12.6 million people.

But the economy, despite promises of a bonanza from recently discovered oilfields, failed to pick up and then plunged into deep recession during the Gulf crisis.

Yemen was ostracised by its Gulf allies for sympathising with Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

NEWS ANALYSIS

"Everything went downhill from then on," one diplomat said.

"The YSP were convinced that Saleh was trying to force them out, using the numerical superiority of the north as the 'democratic' cover... it was a struggle for survival," he added.

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Two-thirds of Israelis to remain in Gaza

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel will keep about two-thirds of the troops currently occupying the Gaza Strip even after the transfer of power to Palestinians, army officers said.

Major General Matan Vilnai, head of the army's southern command zone that includes Gaza, said troops would no longer be based in and patrol through Arab towns.

Instead they will be in several areas allocated to Jewish settlements and along the Strip's southern border with Egypt, with the largest presence in the Katif settlements bloc, Gen. Vilnai said at a news conference detailing Israeli withdrawal plans.

Israel is to begin transferring control over most of the Gaza Strip, as well as the Jericho area in the West Bank, to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as stipulated in the accord signed last Wednesday in Cairo.

But the entry of 9,000 Palestinian police officers into the areas was delayed Sunday, sparking Palestinian protests.

Gen. Vilnai said it was not yet decided exactly when Palestinian police would take over but that it would likely begin this week.

He said some 20 Palestinian officers who arrived last week might begin joint patrols with Israeli troops as early as Tuesday.

When the takeover does begin, the strip will be transferred to Palestinian control in phases, beginning with its south and expanding north, Mr. Vilnai said.

Even after the transfer is completed, Gen. Vilnai said, "Two thirds of the troops there now will remain."

He said most of the reduction would be among reservists who presently form about a third of the occupying force, but he would not specify exact troop numbers. During the Palestinian uprising, thousands of troops were deployed in the narrow strip.

Major General Uzi Dayan, head of the army's planning branch, said the Israeli security arrangements "should in no way limit the Palestinians' ability to control their own affairs."

Gen. Vilnai said the army has spent months planning for worst-case scenarios, including that part of the 9,000 Palestinian police officers might take actions hostile to Israel.

He said he was sure militant groups "will try to do something," noting that two soldiers were slightly wounded earlier Sunday when a patrol was attacked north of Gaza City.

Gen. Vilnai said it was not clear what would happen if Israeli troops needed to chase Palestinian attackers trying to flee into autonomous areas.

The accord signed last Wednesday in Cairo allows Israel full pursuit into Palestinian areas but stipulates such cases should be turned over to the Palestinian police as soon as possible.

Gen. Vilnai said "much will depend on the commanders in the field." He stressed, however, that in the past five years he did not remember a single case of an assailant escaping the area of an attack and then being captured by pursuing forces.

Asked if the army had plans to reoccupy Gaza if necessary, Gen. Vilnai said: "I led a battalion that occupied Gaza in 1967, and I hope it will be the last time."

Israel has imposed such tough conditions on the self-rule deal struck with the PLO that it cannot lead to a Palestinian state, Israeli Culture Minister Shulamit Aloni said Sunday.

"If the British had imposed the same restrictions on us in 1948 as we have imposed on the Palestinians in the Cairo accord we would never have had the state of Israel," she said.

Ms. Aloni was speaking after the weekly cabinet meeting during which the documents signed in Cairo by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat were presented.

The cabinet is to meet again Wednesday to approve the accord before it is presented the same day to the Israeli parliament.

"It now has to be applied as quickly as possible so that we are not the last people in the world to oppress another," Ms. Aloni added.

Israel's electricity company has threatened to cut supplies to the Gaza Strip from Wednesday because the territory's residents are \$12 million in arrears on bills, Israeli radio reported Sunday.

The report came as the Israel-PLO committee on the transfer of civilian authorities to the Palestinians met at the Erez crossing between Israel and Gaza.

Under the May 4 PLO-Israeli deal on self-rule, the future Palestinian authority will have to foot the arrears.

Israeli TV reporter broadcasts from Syria

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel Television broadcast a news report from Syria on Sunday, despite the still-existing state of war between the two countries.

The report included an interview with George Habash, a Palestinian guerrilla leader who rejected the autonomy accord and who has vowed to continue attacks on Israeli targets.

Syria is still a stickler on banning entry to anyone associated with Israel, and Syrian officials overseas have consistently refused to answer questions from Israeli reporters, despite ongoing peace talks with Israel.

Many other Arab countries have allowed in Israeli journalists travelling on other passports with minimum trouble. But journalists crossing into Syria have reported being closely questioned about any associations with Israel.

A Syrian official who unwittingly gave an interview to a European television team acting on Israel Television's

behalf earlier this year was reportedly sacked soon after.

Syrians can pick up Israel TV, and the report broadcast a shot of a Syrian television set tuned into the Israeli news.

Reporter Linda Scherzer spent 10 days in Syria to assess Syrian street reactions to last week's accord which will introduce Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Her report showed opposition to the agreement, especially among Palestinian refugees. Dr. Habash said the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine would continue attacks on Israel, but would avoid attacking Palestinian forces.

The report did not include any interviews with Syrian officials. It did not say whether Ms. Scherzer, who is a Canadian, told her interview subjects she is Israeli, and it abandoned standard practice by not screening the names of her production team.

Palestinian officer returns to bring law and order to his people

By Donna Abu Nasr
The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip — Major General Ibrahim Awad left Gaza a humiliated officer, trudging for eight days through the scorching sands of the Sinai desert to Egypt after Israel seized the strip in the 1967 Middle East war.

He returned Thursday, part of a 20-man vanguard of the Palestinian police force that is to bring law and order to the unruly streets of the Gaza Strip. Hundreds of police still in Egypt, Jordan and Iraq will take up their posts soon.

Gen. Awad said his first encounter with Israeli officers who came to greet the Palesti-

nians was not easy.

"When I first put my hand in the hand of the Israeli officer, I felt my blood boil," said Gen. Awad, 47. "Conflicting emotions were raging within me. But my mind finally won over my heart and the ice has started to melt."

Gen. Awad's group is in Gaza to prepare for the deployment of 9,000 Palestinian policemen in the strip and the West Bank town of Jericho under the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy agreement.

Theirs is a daunting task. They face the challenge of bringing order to people used to rebelling against men in uniform. They also have to make sure that Israel is not

attacked from inside their territory.

Gen. Awad brings with him years of experience as a fighter and as a self-styled politician.

In 1967, he fired anti-tank rounds at Israeli troops. He later participated in anti-Israeli guerrilla raids from South Lebanon and fired artillery guns at Israeli soldiers when they surrounded Palestinian refugee camps during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Gen. Awad became a member of a liaison committee in Beirut, negotiating with his enemies to put an end to the fighting.

"I'm used to this kind of work," said Gen. Awad, now a member of the liaison committee coordinating the handover of power with the Israelis.

Gen. Awad will command a police contingent in the central Khan Younis area where he first began fighting against Israel in 1966 as a lieutenant in the Palestine Liberation Army.

Like the policemen who will deploy in the autonomous areas will come from abroad. Only 2,000 have been recruited from Gaza and the West Bank.

Gen. Awad was born in the village of Hamameh, south of the Israeli town of Ashdod and only about 30 kilometres north of Gaza City. His family left Hamameh during the 1948 Middle East war.

Since Gen. Awad was only

two at the time, he was placed on the family cow for the trek to Gaza City. There, they settled in a refugee camp during one of the most severe winters in the region.

"My earliest memory is that of my parents brushing snow from our tent," said Gen. Awad, adding that "I always knew I wanted to become an officer to liberate Palestine."

After graduating from the military academy in Egypt in June 1966, Gen. Awad went back to the Gaza Strip and joined a PLA battalion stationed in Khan Younis.

On June 5, 1967, the first day of the war, Gen. Awad sat in his tent dreaming of the victory that would come the

second day.

"They promised us victory but we got defeat," said Gen. Awad. "It was like being promised a gift, only to be told the next day there will be no gift. I felt shocked and demoralised."

"If we had the experience we have now, we would have won that war," he added.

Asked how he felt about not realising his dream of getting back all of Palestine, Gen. Awad said: "I'm happy that after all the struggle we got something. It's not enough, but it's better than nothing. I've told the Israeli officers that as long as the intentions are good, coexistence will be possible."

Gen. Awad said he was sure militant groups "will try to do something," noting that two soldiers were slightly wounded earlier Sunday when a patrol was attacked north of Gaza City.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Envoy Special
18:00	News in French
19:15	Grands Galops
19:30	News in Hebrew
19:45	Medical Drama
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Step by Step
20:55	Beyond 2000
21:10	Moon Over Miami
22:00	News in English
22:20	The Cape Rebel
23:10	The Second Half
PRAYER TIMES	
04:10	Fajr
05:30	Dhuhr (Sunrise)
12:30	Dhuhr
16:12	Asr
19:25	Maghrib
20:53	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifela, Tel. 510740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 637275	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel.	
625541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Epiphanius Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Church Tel. 684195	
Step by Step Tel. 654932	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be fine with temperatures gradually rising and winds northerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	18 / 24
Aqaba	18 / 32
Decr.	18 / 26
Jordan Valley	15 / 30
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 22, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings:	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

Amman 34 per cent. Aqaba 33 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Mukhlis Halasa	819220
Dr. Jamil Maraga	776149
Dr. Shafiq Abu Zayed	779962
Dr. Mohammad Al Nakawi	819213
Firas pharmacy	661912
Firdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637025
Nairouth pharmacy	626072
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
Nairouth pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mohammad Al Hila	279773
Alqada pharmacy	(-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Ziyad Z'aiter	(-)
Khalifah pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Rescue	199
Civil Defence Emergency	630341
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Traffic Police	843402
Highway Police	896390
Public Security Department	600221
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897466
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	
(directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport	08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre	813813/22
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn.	644281/6
Akikah Maternity, J. Amn.	64341/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhass, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital	669121
University Hospital	845485
Al-Muhsen Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/37
Al-Abdi, Abdali	664164/6
Italian, Al-Mahajreen	777101/3
Al-Bachir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/26
Army, Marka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	686100
Amal Hospital	674155

ZARQA:

Zarga Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarga Municipal Hospital	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al Hikam Modern Hospital	(09)990930

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital	(02)775555
Great Catholic Hospital	(02)722775
Ben Arafat's Hospital	(02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111
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FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:10	Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:45	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
08:00	Damascus (RJ)
08:45	Dhahran (RJ)
10:25	Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:20	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
12:35	Abu Dhabi, Aqaba (RJ)
15:00	Sanaa (add) (RJ)
17:25	London (RJ)
18:30	Sanaa (add) (RJ)
18:30	Cairo (RJ)
18:30	Frankfurt (RJ)
18:30	Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
19:20	Vicenna, London (RJ)
22:30	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
03:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Home News

Senate ratifies draft tenancy law

By Karouza Jadoun
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Upper House of Parliament (Senate) Monday ratified the draft tenancy law which was referred to it after approval by the Lower House.

The draft legislation was ratified after amendments to some of its clauses that were debated during the four-hour session.

The draft law under consideration is a 1982 temporary law that was issued at the time by the government. According to the Constitution any temporary law should be referred to Parliament to be debated and either ratified or repealed.

Monday's Senate debate focused on a proposal by Senators Jawdat Shoul and Kamal Shahr at Article 5, which orders that leases reached before the law goes into effect shall remain valid. New leases, however, will be binding on signatory parties as written, the senators proposed.

Senators Shoul and Shahr said their proposal was aimed at encouraging investments by landlords who earlier feared that tenants were becoming the actual owners of rented properties in accordance with the temporary law.

After a lengthy debate, however, the new proposal was rejected and the Senate ratified the Article as it was referred to it by the Lower House.

The senate amended Paragraph Three of Clause C of Article 5 which originally stipulated that if the tenant subleased the property or part of it to another party without a written acceptance from the landlord, the tenant can be evicted.

The amendment states that in cases where the tenant may be responsible for another member of his family this clause would not apply.

Another point of contention was Article 7. Naela Rashdan proposed that this article be amended to allow any woman arbitrarily divorced with custody of children to have the right to keep the rental of her home with her ex-husband for herself and her children even if the husband ended the lease.

Rapporteur Ahmad Tarawneh opposed this amendment saying that the landlord should not be affected by such family matters, and he considered the divorced wife as a new tenant who is not related by any means to the original tenant, that is the husband.

But the senate agreed on Senator Rashdan's amendment and ratified it.

Visiting German politicians meet with House committee

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 22-member team representing political parties in the parliament of Lower Saxony in Germany Monday met here with the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Lower House of Parliament and discussed the Middle East peace process and issues of common interest to Jordan and Germany.

An official at the German embassy here told the Jordan Times that the team, which arrived Saturday on a three-day visit to Jordan, was briefed by the committee's chairman, Abdul Hadi Majali, on the general political situation in the region, progress in the peace process and other issues.

Discussion also covered the siege on Aqaba, the situation in Bosnia and the economic situation in Jordan, which, Mr. Majali said, was severely affected by the economic blockade on Aqaba.

Mr. Majali called on Germany to help the Kingdom overcome these difficulties and thanked Bonn for its continued support of Jordan's stand.

The German embassy official said that the team includes members of German labour unions who are interested in learning about the country's economic situation and its labour union movement.

She said the team visited the Arab Potash Company (APC) headquarters in Amman and was briefed on the company's operations and the contribution of workers towards promoting production and their involvement in decision making related to their company's operations.

House condemns 'foreign attempts' to fuel civil war in Yemen

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Monday condemned "possible attempts by foreign groups" to fuel the civil war in Yemen in what was seen as an indirect reference to some Gulf countries that have been allegedly supplying arms and money to the parties to the conflict.

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"The major victim of the war will be the Yemeni unity, which is the core of Arab unity," the House said in a statement.

Referring to Jordan's hosting of the signing ceremony of the Yemeni reconciliation accord in February, the House said its concern with the situation in Yemen stems from its belief in the necessity of maintaining all that is positive in the Arab World.

The conflict between the formerly north and south Yemenis exploded into full fledged civil war last Thursday when troops loyal to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Yemeni Vice President Ali Salem Al Beidh attacked each other near the border of the two Yemenis.

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Diplomats were Saturday quoted as saying that President Saleh's troops have tightened the noose around Aden, the former capital of South Yemen, and were poised to break through the gates of the city.

President Saleh seems determined to settle the conflict with his southern foes militarily amidst calls from Aden that it is willing to accept foreign mediation.

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Indications that the civil war was instigated and supported by foreign countries also came from the Jordan Press Association which said the bloody events in Yemen "could open the door (to interfere in the conflict) for suspicious foreign sides that work against the interests of the (Arab) nation and its aspiration for unity." The association said in a statement that the fighting in Yemen poses a threat to Arab national security.

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Jordanians form group to prevent family violence

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

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Dr. Rhebeihat told the Jordan Times that the new society is a voluntary and non-profit organisation with one goal on its agenda — "a violence-free society."

"One of our organisation's priorities is to raise public awareness towards the dangers of a non-democratic communication between family members, and to cut down on violence in the family," Dr. Rhebeihat said.

He said in many cases reported, family members resort to violence instead of communicating and listening and constructively participating in all family affairs, adding that some members express their failure to communicate rationally and use reason by turning to violence.

According to Ahmad Khalaf, a psychiatrist in the private sector, who is also a volunteer member in the society, in recent years, some social data in Jordan included reported incidents of spouse and child abuse, and "the actual incidents of such abuse are difficult to determine without detailed studies."

These studies, Dr. Khalaf said, face various obstacles since "there has been no sign so far of willingness among our society to talk about the subject openly."

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Dr. Rhebeihat explained the methods the organisation will adopt in aiding victims of abuse and family violence. He said the society will consider using the media by fuelling the existing programmes on television and radio, adding that programmes will incorporate elements that will emphasise the importance of understanding, two-way, and three-way conversations, listening, rationalising and tolerance.

"We will register all enthused individuals who are willing to volunteer and help families under difficult circumstances," Dr. Rhebeihat said.

Moreover, the sociologist said the society will recruit volunteers to organise picnics for children to educate them on ways of communicating and discussing topics about their own society and comprehending it.

"We believe that we ought to approach people who never received the quality of help they deserve and affect their lives with mild intervention," he said.

Dr. Rhebeihat pointed out that in general, Jordan spent a large proportion of its resources on its infrastructure and "for the past five or six years we turned to people and we started emphasising the need for love, care and attachment and focusing on psychological and mental well-being."

"This shift is very important because it affects the quality of people's lives as much as their income in life," he said.

Dr. Khalaf defined violence in a psychological perspective saying that violence could be defined with various meanings. "Violence is a trend inherited in human beings, and it is one of the characteristics of every human being," Dr. Khalaf said.

"In our case (the new society) we mean to prevent physical violence, mainly against women and children."

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Dr. Khalaf cited a study conducted abroad explaining that spouse and child abuse are not limited to any particular class. He compared the West's experiences with Jordan's saying, "abroad, children, especially newborns are abused more by their mothers, while in Jordan we see a different trend; older children are still under the mercy of the first family figure, the father."

Other cases of battered children, according to Dr. Khalaf, are results of unwanted pregnancies. He said solutions to overcome such problems require immediate attention. In cases of battered or divorced women, the society will work to secure jobs and homes for these women, he added.

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The shepherd, who was not identified, told police he was grazing his sheep in that area when he discovered the body.

Preliminary investigations indicated that the dead man, identified as Hussein Qassem, had no bruises, and there were no signs of violence on the body.

Police said they were investigating the incident and would not release any further details. The authorities said they had transferred the body to Al Bashir Hospital for autopsy.

Australian meat group to open office in Amman

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation (AMLC) will open a regional office in Amman within three months to promote the sale of live sheep to the region, particularly to Jordan, according to Supply Minister Rami Ibrahim.

The minister told the Jordan Times that he learned of the decision Monday in a meeting with AMLC Chairman John Kerin with whom he discussed trade issues and the regional office's planned operations.

According to the minister, the centre would be entrusted with conducting studies on prospects of live sheep trade between Australia and the countries of the region and making recommendations to the Australian government accordingly.

The creation of the regional office here came as a fruit of talks between Mr. Ibrahim and Australian officials, during his tour last month in Australia and talks held in Amman last February with Hendy Cowan, who headed a delegation from the Western Australian Ministry of Commerce and Trade during a visit to Jordan.

It is hoped that through this office more livestock would be sold to Jordan in barter exchanges for Jordanian phosphate-based fertilisers, said Mr. Ibrahim.

Australian embassy sources in Amman said that Jordan last year imported \$67 million worth of Australian sheep and dairy products against \$5 million worth of phosphate and some fertilisers.

According to the embassy, Mr. Ibrahim discussed with Mr. Kerin prospects of Jordan importing fresh chilled meat from Australia. This will become possible when Royal Jordanian, which has acquired landing rights in Sydney, starts flying to Australia and will be able to transport shipments of fresh meat, said the embassy source.

According to the embassy, Mr. Kerin, who left Monday for the Gulf following a three-day visit to Jordan, had inaugurated a new chiller facility at the Amman Municipality slaughterhouse. The chiller was donated by the Australian Sheep Exporting Industry and the AMLC to assist with the efficient operation of the slaughterhouse, said the embassy.

The ministry and the embassy said that in 1993 Australia shipped nearly half a million sheep to the Jordanian market, and it is hoped that the regional centre, the second of its kind after the office in Bahrain, would further develop trade between Jordan and Australia.

Embassy officials said also that by July 1, an Australian trade office will be established in Amman to help promote all kinds of trade between Australia and the countries of the region.

According to the embassy, the office will be directly in charge of trade with Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon.

Before his departure, Mr. Kerin met with Agriculture Minister Mohammad Farhan to discuss cooperation in agricultural matters.

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Karak woman gives birth to triplets

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Home News

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After a lengthy debate, however, the new proposal was rejected and the Senate ratified the Article as it was referred to it by the Lower House.

The senate amended Paragraph Three of Clause C of Article 5 which originally stipulated that if the tenant subleased the property or part of it to another party without a written acceptance from the landlord, the tenant can be evicted.

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Another point of contention was Article 7. Naela Rashdan proposed that this article be amended to allow any woman arbitrarily divorced with custody of children to have the right to keep the rental of her home with her ex-husband for herself and her children even if the husband ended the lease.

Rapporteur Ahmad Tarawneh opposed this amendment saying that the landlord should not be affected by such family matters, and he considered the divorced wife as a new tenant who is not related by any means to the original tenant, that is the husband.

But the senate agreed on Senator Rashdan's amendment and ratified it.

Visiting German politicians meet with House committee

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

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An official at the German embassy here told the Jordan Times that the team, which arrived Saturday on a three-day visit to Jordan, was briefed by the committee's chairman, Abdul Hadi Majali, on the general political situation in the region, progress in the peace process and other issues.

Discussion also covered the siege on Aqaba, the situation in Bosnia and the economic situation in Jordan, which, Mr. Majali said, was severely affected by the economic blockade on Aqaba.

Mr. Majali called on Germany to help the Kingdom overcome these difficulties and thanked Bonn for its continued support of Jordan's stand.

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Dr. Khalaf cited a study conducted abroad explaining that spouse and child abuse are not limited to any particular class. He compared the West's experiences with Jordan's saying, "abroad, children, especially newborns are abused more by their mothers, while in Jordan we see a different trend; older children are still under the mercy of the first family figure, the father."

Other cases of battered children, according to Dr. Khalaf, are results of unwanted pregnancies. He said solutions to overcome such problems require immediate attention. In cases of battered or divorced women, the society will work to secure jobs and homes for these women, he added.

Mysterious death in Wadi Mousa remains under investigation by police

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Wadi Mousa police are investigating the mysterious death of a 30-year-old man, whose body was discovered Sunday by a shepherd in Al Hajin area, near Wadi Mousa, a police report said.

The shepherd, who was not identified, told police he was grazing his sheep in that area when he discovered the body.

Preliminary investigations indicated that the dead man, identified as Hussein Qassem, had no bruises, and there were no signs of violence on the body.

Police said they were investigating the incident and would not release any further details. The authorities said they had transferred the body to Al Bashir Hospital for autopsy.

Australian meat group to open office in Amman

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation (AMLC) will open a regional office in Amman within three months to promote the sale of live sheep to the region, particularly to Jordan, according to Supply Minister Rami Ibrahim.

The minister told the Jordan Times that he learned of the decision Monday in a meeting with AMLC Chairman John Kerin with whom he discussed trade issues and the regional office's planned operations.

According to the minister, the centre would be entrusted with conducting studies on prospects of live sheep trade between Australia and the countries of the region and making recommendations to the Australian government accordingly.

The creation of the regional office here came as a fruit of talks between Mr. Ibrahim and Australian officials, during his tour last month in Australia and talks held in Amman last February with Hendy Cowan, who headed a delegation from the Western Australian Ministry of Commerce and Trade during a visit to Jordan.

It is hoped that through this office more livestock would be sold to Jordan in barter exchanges for Jordanian phosphate-based fertilisers, said Mr. Ibrahim.

Australian embassy sources in Amman said that Jordan last year imported \$67 million worth of Australian sheep and dairy products against \$5 million worth of phosphate and some fertilisers.

According to the embassy, Mr. Ibrahim discussed with Mr. Kerin prospects of Jordan importing fresh chilled meat from Australia. This will become possible when Royal Jordanian, which has acquired landing rights in Sydney, starts flying to Australia and will be able to transport shipments of fresh meat, said the embassy source.

According to the embassy, Mr. Kerin, who left Monday for the Gulf following a three-day visit to Jordan, had inaugurated a new chiller facility at the Amman Municipality slaughterhouse. The chiller was donated by the Australian Sheep Exporting Industry and the AMLC to assist with the efficient operation of the slaughterhouse, said the embassy.

The ministry and the embassy said that in 1993 Australia shipped nearly half a million sheep to the Jordanian market, and it is hoped that the regional centre, the second of its kind after the office in Bahrain, would further develop trade between Jordan and Australia.

Embassy officials said also that by July 1, an Australian trade office will be established in Amman to help promote all kinds of trade between Australia and the countries of the region.

According to the embassy, the office will be directly in charge of trade with Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon.

Before his departure, Mr. Kerin met with Agriculture Minister Mohammad Farhan to discuss cooperation in agricultural matters.

According to the embassy official, Mr. Kerin extended an invitation for two Jordanian veterinarians to visit Australia to benefit from modern techniques used in veterinary services and quarantine systems in force in Australia.

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Talks to avoid problems

THE JORDANIAN-PLO new round of economic consultations and negotiations aiming to put some flesh on the bones of the accord between the two sides could prove to be an opportune occasion to gauge properly the extent of any discrepancies that may exist between the Jan. 6 agreement and the PLO-Israeli economic accord struck in Paris last week. The fact that the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement was basically a declaration of principles rather than a detailed economic package provides room for differing interpretations by both Jordan and the PLO. But provided there is sufficient political will on the part of the PLO to live up to its long standing commitment to put its relations with Jordan ahead of its relations with Israel any differences of the kind can be solved and rather quickly. As the Paris economic pact contained enough detailed information to cast doubt on the willingness of the PLO to accord Jordan a preferential treatment, there is every fear that things can somehow go wrong from here. The place of the Jordanian currency in the Palestinian territories and the Jordanian Central Bank can, for instance, be negatively affected during the interim period by any predominance in using the Israeli shekel and following Israeli monetary policies. The creation of virtually one custom union between the Palestinian territories and Israel also has to be worrying, even though there are clauses in the Paris agreement that can accommodate legitimate Jordanian interests.

Jordan would want to give the PLO side the benefit of the doubt, as it has done so often in the past, by waiting to see how the Palestinian leadership intends to address the outstanding issues. Better still this country would want to watch and see how the arrival of Mr. Ahmed Qureia, the chief PLO economic negotiator, could rectify the shortcomings of the January accord and put to rest Jordan's qualms about what happened in Paris. In the final analysis what is even more important than the fine economic issues that would be discussed starting today would be the overall assessment of the PLO-Jordanian relations. Does the PLO seek to have the kind of relations with Jordan that it purports to desire or does it wish to submit to Israeli designs and become an economic tool in its hands? The people of this country have a stake in appropriate economic relations with the West Bank and Gaza Strip just as the Palestinian people have a vested interest in maintaining the best of relations with their brethren across the river.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

REGARDLESS of the charges and counter-charges exchange by the Yemeni leaders over the current fighting in Yemen, all indications point to the fact that external forces are fuelling the conflict, said Al Dastour daily Monday. External influences are very dangerous because they tend to sow the seeds of permanent conflict and dissent, and are bound to totally destroy Yemen's dream of unity, said the paper. One cannot rule out the notion that the conflict in Yemen is by no means isolated from the conspiracies being concocted by hostile forces to create regional unrest, it said. These forces' plot, said the paper, could be part of a general plan to impose punishment on the Yemeni people for adopting policies with which certain regional or international powers are not happy. Therefore, it added, there is urgent need for the Arabs to ensure non-interference by foreign parties, and at the same time halt all arms supplies to both sides involved in the conflict. While we watch with pain the ongoing fighting among brothers, added the daily, we are appalled at the loss of innocent life and the destruction of property and economic and social infrastructure.

MAHMOUD Rimawi, a columnist in Al Rai daily, expressed appreciation of France's position with regard to the siege on Aqaba and its recent decision to stop its participation in the inspection of Aqaba-bound vessels. France is to be thanked for its independent stand from that of the United States and its unbiased attitude and keenness on alleviating Jordan's economic ordeal, said the writer. Following Baghdad's favourable response to the United Nations demands and the U.N. inspectors wishes, France, Russia and China have displayed readiness to lift the embargo on Iraq, and likewise Paris is now showing its stand by halting inspection of ships bound for Jordan, the writer added. The French stand reflects the conviction on the part of Paris that Jordan has nothing to do with the Gulf conflict in the first place and that the siege on Aqaba was unjustified and it also clearly points to the fact that France is keen on maintaining strong ties with the Kingdom, said the writer. Mr. Rimawi said that France is now trying to compensate Jordan for the severe damage caused by the siege through continued economic aid to the country.

By Valerie Yorke

The fact that the Declaration of Principles (DoP) in itself did nothing to bridge the irreconcilable demands of Israel and the Palestinians made the economic component of the declaration a key element to agreement in Oslo. There was recognition that the Israelis and Palestinians had to be given a stake in the process if they were to provide the support required. The interests of neighbouring Arab states also had to be addressed and incentive provided for them to support the new momentum rather than spoil it. The DoP's provisions for economic development in the occupied territories, broad Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation and the prospect of a regional development programme of which Israel would be part could not, of course, guarantee the accord's success. However, the negotiations calculated that these three economic pillars would be crucial in winning over Israelis, Palestinians and Arabs and in ensuring that any subsequent political agreements endured.

The importance of steps towards Israeli-Palestinian and wider regional cooperation proceeding simultaneously with economic development in the occupied territories was recognised in Oslo. But it is also the case that the areas identified for economic cooperation within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian Continuing Committee and in the protocol on regional cooperation have placed Israel at an advantage in negotiations with the Palestinians and the Arab states, and amount to a reward. The Palestinians for their part regard the protocols as the price they paid for recognition, in view of the fact that there is no provision for correcting the distortions imposed by the occupation and that the issues of the settlements, Jerusalem, refugees and borders are not addressed.

The fact is that those negotiating the DoP — the occupier and the occupied — did so from a position of inequality which inevitably affects the scope for manoeuvre of both sides as they try to achieve their preferred economic arrangements. The result of Israel's occupation policies has been to distort economic development in the occupied territories, leaving them highly dependent on Israel for employment of labour, for outlets for exports and for industrial inputs. For Israel, the West Bank and Gaza constitute its second largest market, while much of its agriculture and services depend on cheap Palestinian labour. This skewed inter-dependence means that any restructuring of trade and labour flows and levels of taxation will have important repercussions for both economies.

The outcome of the bilateral economic talks is thus crucial to both sides. A present they are deeply divided over Israel's proposals for a customs union. Israel wants to protect its agriculture at home and its markets in the occupied territories, while the Palestinians are striving to dismantle the distortions of the occupation and establish a better balance in trade relations with their Israeli and Arab neighbours. At the same time, Israel's need for access to markets in the West Bank and Gaza and for economic ties with the broader region, and the Palestinians' need for Israeli inputs for much of its manufacturing, suggest that mutually acceptable trade-offs can be found. One such is a

quasi-customs union — with Israel and the Palestinians agreeing to mutually acceptable but differing levels of tariffs to be applied to different categories of goods entering the self-rule area from Jordan.

In return, the Palestinians would undertake to turn and persuade the Arabs to relax the terms of the Arab boycott to permit the export of their own manufactured goods containing Israeli inputs. The negotiated results are likely to bring mutual benefits, but there is a recognition that without eventual moves towards genuine cooperation between equals the necessary confidence will not be created to attract private-sector investment to the new Palestinian entity. The all important growth required to sustain development (once international funds dry up) and on which the success of the accord ultimately depends, will not take place.

Regionally, the DoP provides for drawing the international community and regional states into a network of economic ties with Israel without the latter either renouncing its claim to the West Bank and Gaza or committing itself to full withdrawal. Using the international and regional support for the DoP to strengthen its argument, Israel has pressed for an end to the Arab boycott, to which the Arab states' official response has been that such a decision can only be taken by the Arab League once Israel commits itself to withdrawal on the basis of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. However, one indication of the way in which the DoP is changing Arab thinking on the boycott comes from Jordan. A key distinction is now being drawn between political normalisation, meaning full diplomatic relations with Israel, which will only be forthcoming with a final peace treaty, and the reaching of reciprocal and mutually satisfactory agreements with Israel beforehand.

Prospects for a comprehensive peace

The Israeli-PLO decision to pursue a path of reconciliation unleashed an undeniable momentum on both the Israeli-Palestinian track and in Israel's talks with Jordan and Syria. However, the Oslo breakthrough and the push provided

by the international aid effort will not be enough to ensure their continuation. At some stage the parties will insist — and it is ultimately in the interests of the international community that they do — on clarifying the destination of the process. If this falls short of their minimal goals, then the process will lose credibility and all support. By putting the settlements issue on the agenda, the Hebron massacre has effectively brought forward the moment of clarification. A number of problems flow from this.

The first problem is inter-party. This concerns the irreconcilability of the parties' minimum goals and competing claims for land, rooted in the aspirations and security perceptions of their leaders and supporters. There is no indication that Yitzhak Rabin has relaxed his opposition to a Palestinian state or that, even were he or his successors to do so, they would convince the Israeli public that this was compatible with Israel's security. Mr. Arafat, meanwhile, is likely to continue to present the DoP as the first step towards the Palestinians' goal of an independent state, despite mounting scepticism within the Palestinian camp that this is achievable.

A second problem is that scope for statesmanship is limited by domestic preoccupations with power. Both Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat are under pressure to persuade the sceptics that the DoP serves their interests to a greater degree than is apparent. Inherent in all of this is the danger that in playing to their publics, whose support they need to continue, the leaderships have inadvertently re-erected the barriers of hostility, losing sight of the shared vision that underpinned their original accord. Furthermore, the difficulties of forging a balance between winning support from their publics and reaching the compromises to keep up momentum have resulted in months of delay, which has carried a political price. Rejectionists on both sides have shown their capacity for violence which could at any moment escalate out of control. Meanwhile, continuing Israeli political repression in the occupied territories has critically eroded political support for

both the PLO and the DoP. Against this backdrop, the weaker party — Yasser Arafat's PLO — was apparently under pressure to concede in the runup to the conclusion of the agreement on Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

The third problem is intra-Palestinian. The Palestinians are now deeply divided over the merits of the DoP and the peace process and in the debate over the political and economic issues connected with the transition. Mr. Arafat's failure to address the discontent on either score has thrown his leadership into question because the Palestinians feel that he has put their goal of a state at grave risk. The problem is that the two accords with Israel are perceived to have rendered an independent state unachievable, because Israel has neither renounced its claim to the land of the West Bank and Gaza nor admitted its status as occupier. The fear is that the PLO's acquiescence in this suggests that its commitment to an independent state has weakened and that the current talks based on the DoP amount to the Palestinians reaching a new modus vivendi on Israeli terms under which they stand to win a fractured entity of divided parts, not an independent state. All this suggests that Mr. Arafat has a choice either to continue to succumb to American and Israeli pressures to concede and engage in tactical manoeuvring to achieve momentum towards some ill-defined goal, which is less than a state; or to rebuild a tougher, coherent strategy that puts the Palestinian national aspiration for a state back on the agenda — a move which will require pressing for a renegotiation of the DoP.

A fourth problem revolves around the interplay between the Madrid framework and the domestic and regional policies of the Arab states. The Arab World always accepted that the different timing and separation of the bilateral tracks was likely to be exploited by Israel, and that there was no guarantee that all tracks could reach a negotiated solution, let alone on all issues at the same time. They have therefore constantly reiterated their commitment to a comprehensive settlement based on

U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 involving full Israeli withdrawal and self-determination for the Palestinians. In the event the DoP, though concerned with the Palestinian interim phase, introduced a dynamic for change in the wider process. For Jordan and Syria, it removed past inhibitions over moving ahead of the Palestinians. Neither wants to lose out on the political and economic benefits to be had from the process under way by seeming reluctant to join it, although both have been careful to keep their Arab credentials intact — as their withdrawal from the bilateral talks after the Hebron massacre demonstrated.

The day after the signing of the DoP, Jordan signed its own agenda for talks with Israel. Subsequently it formed a tri-lateral committee with the United States and Israel and reached an agreement with Israel on banking in the West Bank. Jordan's objectives were to win the goodwill of the United States and to position itself to exert leverage over developments on the West Bank which will inevitably impinge on Jordan's economic and political security. In the process it has turned its approach to the peace process on its head. While the goal remains the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, the reaching of interim arrangements to arrive at such a peace is now both justified and required. Normalisation with Israel in the sense of full diplomatic relations depends on mutually satisfactory arrangements being reached in all areas that permit a peace treaty to be signed.

President Hafez Al Assad's moves have been consistent with his aim of crafting a leadership for Syria on the post cold war regional map and finding a new source of legitimacy for his minority regime based on Syria's civil development. A positive attitude towards the peace process qualifies Syria as a partner in an American regional design and any accompanying economic rewards. But Mr. Assad will be tough on the basis that Syria's claim to the Golan is backed by international law, while waiting to see how the Israeli-Palestinian track proceeds. Moreover, Mr. Assad wants Syria to be the key to peace,

setting the terms and endorsing the final act, and insists that there can be no talk of peace with Israel until a comprehensive settlement is reached. He can afford to wait in the knowledge that Jordan will not (and Lebanon cannot) make a separate peace. There can be no comprehensive peace without Syria, and Mr. Assad's calculation may be that Israel's desire for peace could result in a key role for Damascus in extracting more generous terms from Israel for the Palestinians.

Conclusion

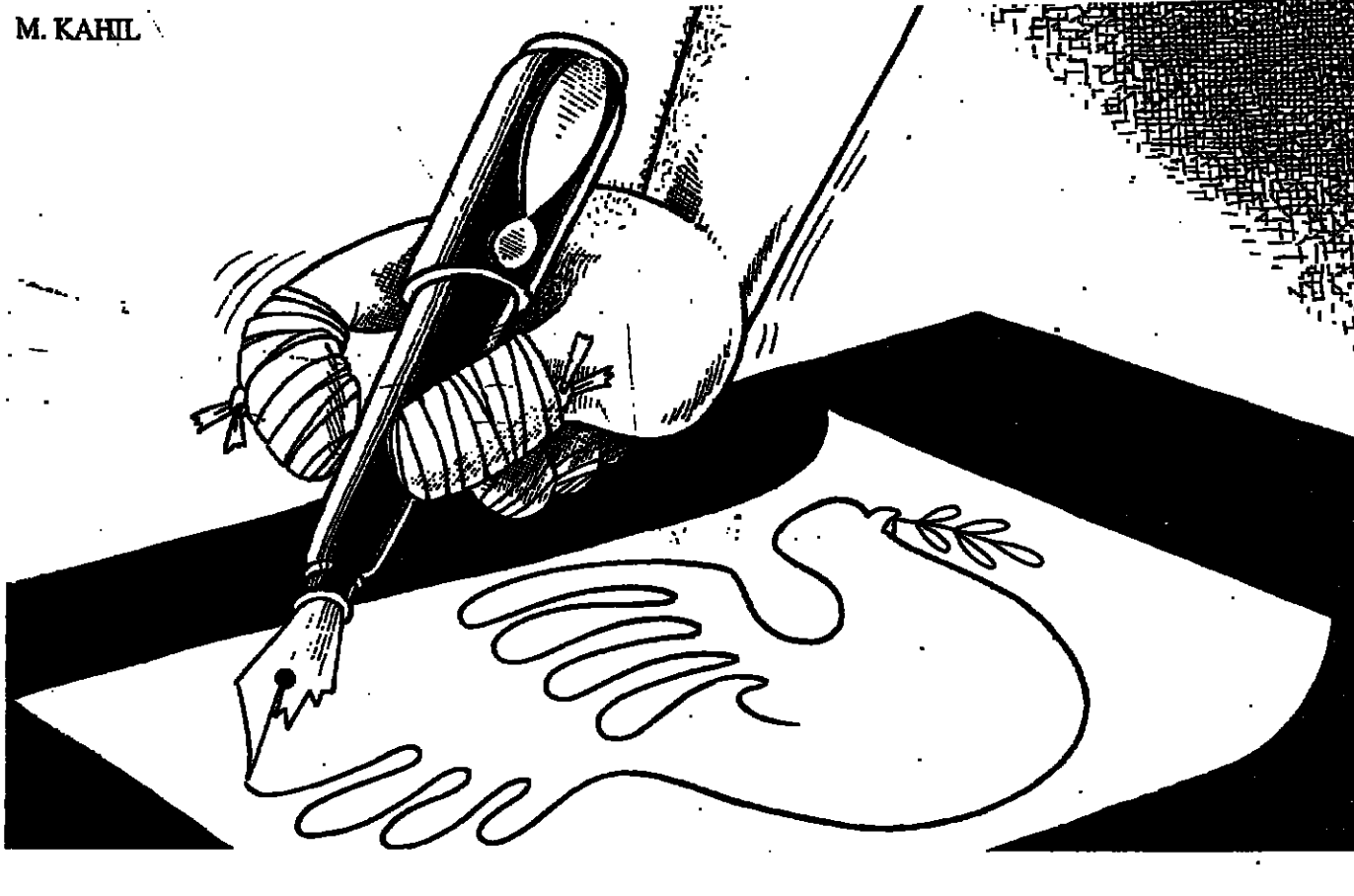
After decades of conflict, dramatic change is unfolding in the Middle East as a result of the Madrid peace process and the Oslo accord to which it gave birth. Even after Hebron and the revenge killing of Israelis by Palestinians, the international events which set former foes on the course of reconciliation — in the case of the PLO and Israel a course initiated by themselves — remain the same. Both leaderships have an enormous stake in success and their peoples in the hoped-for benefits of peace. The international community — states, organisations and business — has been pulled into the process so that sufficient interests might be harnessed to sustain momentum when difficulties between the parties arise. At the same time Israel and Palestinians know they have no practical alternative, and together with Arab leaders also know that their collective failure to see the process through, and the disappointed expectations this would generate, would play into the hands of the Islamic militants and augur a turbulent future.

On this analysis, it would seem fair tentatively to suggest that while the peace process will be subject to major setbacks and delays, the agreements so far reached rule out a return to the status quo ante, and that the qualitative change in the perceptions of Israel and its Arab adversaries that has taken place virtually rules out resort to war involving the use of weapons of mass destruction. Beyond this a healthy dose of caution is in order. There is no evidence to suggest that Israelis have collectively reconciled themselves to living within the 1967 borders or that they are under any American pressure to do so. At the same time there is no prospect that a durable comprehensive settlement can be reached unless a just solution is found for the Palestinians. The time has come for the United States and others to be much more active in giving Palestinian and Israeli leaders the strength they need to carry on and in helping the parties satisfy themselves on the practicability and acceptability of a set of proposals that has the potential to meet Palestinian demands for independence and Israel's demand for security. For all the past momentum, Palestinian opposition to the peace is gaining and selling the Palestinians short now would be guaranteed to topple Yasser Arafat, undermine the moderate trend he represents and sow the seeds of a future Palestinian revolt.

The above is the second and last part of an article which was written before the signing of the self-rule accord between the PLO and Israel in Cairo Wednesday. The first part of the article, which is reprinted from the May edition of The World Today, appeared Monday.

The slow march of peace

M. KAHIL



quasi-customs union — with Israel and the Palestinians agreeing to mutually acceptable but differing levels of tariffs to be applied to different categories of goods entering the self-rule area from Jordan.

In return, the Palestinians would undertake to turn and persuade the Arabs to relax the terms of the Arab boycott to permit the export of their own manufactured goods containing Israeli inputs. The negotiated results are likely to bring mutual benefits, but there is a recognition that without eventual moves towards genuine cooperation between equals the necessary confidence will not be created to attract private-sector investment to the new Palestinian entity. The all important growth required to sustain development (once international funds dry up) and on which the success of the accord ultimately depends, will not take place.

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Conclusion

After decades of conflict, dramatic change is unfolding in the Middle East as a result of the Madrid peace process and the Oslo accord to which it gave birth. Even after Hebron and the revenge killing of Israelis by Palestinians, the international events which set former foes on the course of reconciliation — in the case of the PLO and Israel a course initiated by themselves — remain the same. Both leaderships have an enormous stake in success and their peoples in the hoped-for benefits of peace. The international community — states, organisations and business — has been pulled into the process so that sufficient interests might be harnessed to sustain momentum when difficulties between the parties arise. At the same time Israel and Palestinians know they have no practical alternative, and together with Arab leaders also know that their collective failure to see the process through, and the disappointed expectations this would generate, would play into the hands of the Islamic militants and augur a turbulent future.

On this analysis, it would seem fair tentatively to suggest that while the peace process will be subject to major setbacks and delays, the agreements so far reached rule out a return to the status quo ante, and that the qualitative change in the perceptions of Israel and its Arab adversaries that has taken place virtually rules out resort to war involving the use of weapons of mass destruction. Beyond this a healthy dose of caution is in order. There is no evidence to suggest that Israelis have collectively reconciled themselves to living within the 1967 borders or that they are under any American pressure to do so. At the same time there is no prospect that a durable comprehensive settlement can be reached unless a just solution is found for the Palestinians. The time has come for the United States and others to be much more active in giving Palestinian and Israeli leaders the strength they need to carry on and in helping the parties satisfy themselves on the practicability and acceptability of a set of proposals that has the potential to meet Palestinian demands for independence and Israel's demand for security. For all the past momentum, Palestinian opposition to the peace is gaining and selling the Palestinians short now would be guaranteed to topple Yasser Arafat, undermine the moderate trend he represents and sow the seeds of a future Palestinian revolt.

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An uncertain future for Indonesia

By J. A. C. Mackie

JAKARTA — The recent anti-Chinese rioting in Medan arose out of a series of labour disputes, but it has added a disturbing element of volatility to the political situation in Indonesia. After a long period of stability, the world's fourth largest nation faces an unpredictable future.

Statements by President Suharto earlier this year that he would step down after his current five-year term ends in 1998 could well mark a new phase in Indonesia as the politics of succession take hold.

Mr. Suharto, a retired general, has been in office since 1967. Under his administration, the country has had 25 years of carefully contrived stability. This has provided a basis for economic growth and investment.

But social and political developments in the next four years are likely to be far less easily controlled by the government. The recent outburst of popular anger

against the economically influential Chinese minority is deeply worrying.

Mr. Suharto has suggested before that he would retire, and then changed his mind. He is unlikely to do so again this time, except in dire circumstances. By 1998 he will be 76. More important, military leaders have given strong indications that they want him to go sooner rather than later. He could not be entirely sure of military support if he showed signs of still clinging to office.

He has not yet indicated his preferred successor. The jockeying for position is bound to intensify. B. J. Habibie, the minister for research and technology, is the closest confidant of Mr. Suharto in the cabinet. He has been playing a high-profile role for several years and has attracted many followers to his bandwagon while publicly denying that

he aspires to the presidency. However, he is not liked by the military.

It is almost certain that the next leader of Indonesia will be an army man. General Try Sutrisno, a former armed forces commander who serves as vice president, would probably take over the presidency with support from the military if it were to become vacant for any reason before 1998. But General Try, although popular, may not be strong enough if there is a vigorous contest.

It is not clear who speaks on behalf of the armed forces these days. There is no longer a united military view on major policy issues, including the political succession. Since the departure last year of Benny Murdani, the powerful armed forces commander and defence minister, no one has exerted anything like the same influence in the security services.

General Murdani was increasingly at odds with President Suharto on several issues, mainly over the highly visible and contentious business interests of the Suharto family, many of whose members are in association with Chinese entrepreneurs. General Murdani may yet play a king-making role.

Mr. Suharto has concentrated enormous power in his own hands while carefully controlling factional and grass-roots politics. As a result, candidates for the succession will have to build up support bases within the state apparatus, including the armed forces, or among groups such as activist Muslims or nationalists, as a sign of their political strength. It will no longer suffice to have Mr. Suharto's backing.

Indonesia has become slightly more pluralistic in the last couple of years. Several Muslim groups have been

allowed greater leeway and are developing high expectations of their future political influence. Greater freedom of expression has been permitted in the press, although still within tight limits. But if tighter social controls have to be imposed to guard against further anti-Chinese outbreaks, it is the Muslim groups, traditionally the most strongly anti-Chinese elements in the country, who are likely to be most antagonised.

Taiwan and South Korea have become democratic since the mid-1980s, but Indonesia is unlikely to take a similar course. The army shows no sign of being willing to give up much of its capacity to exercise tight social control. The political parties have little cohesion and shallow roots in society. The middle class is still small and weak, and its political loyal-

ties are divided. So much attention will be focused on the succession struggle over the next few years, with the political influence and perquisites of so many people depending on the outcome, that it is unlikely much thought will be given to the principles at stake in creating new or better institutions to ensure more responsible government. There is little prospect of a reformist coalition emerging in Indonesia to push for democratic change.

Yet without such pressure, there is no chance of changing the personalised corrupt style of government. Instead, some form of authoritarian rule is likely to continue, with the armed forces calling the shots and the present government structures still essentially in place.

The writer is professor emeritus at the Australian National University in Canberra and author of several books on Indonesia. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

Handwritten note in Arabic script: "هذا هو الحق"

By James Flannery
 Reuter

JOHANNESBURG — The deep scars of apartheid bring bitter tears to black victims but the legacy of decades of blinkered racism also provokes shocked smiles from liberal South African whites and helps market traders calculate profits.

A black mother still grieves over the injustice of a case that made world headlines — a white farmer got a suspended jail term for the torture-killing of her husband over the deaths of two puppies.

White liberals, their feelings of guilt eased by South Africa's historic all-race elections on April 26-29, are snapping up books that recount some of the ironies of apartheid — whose high priests thought they had a hot line to God.

On the side of Mammon, a precious metals newsletter for businessmen seeks with a chilling graph to co-relate South Africa's political killings with platinum and gold prices.

Seven years ago black farm worker Eric Sambo, driving a tractor, accidentally ran over and killed two dogs belonging to his white employer, Jacobus Vorster, in the northern Transvaal town of Louis Trichardt.

Vorster and his neighbour Petrus Leonard beat and kicked Sambo unconscious. They left him overnight tied to a tree and resumed the punishment the next day, forcing other blacks to take part. The man bled to death.

Leonard was fined 500 rand (then \$240) for his part in the killing in September 1987. Vorster received a suspended five-year jail sentence and was ordered to pay the dead man's widow 120 rand (then \$55) a month for five years.

The judge said he took into account the embarrassment Vorster would suffer, and said another reason for not jailing him was that 44 black workers on his farm might lose their jobs.

This was white-ruled South Africa where courts often treated Europeans leniently even in cases of shocking brutality against blacks.

In the new South Africa, where racial reconciliation is the theme, Sambo's widow Sarah says of the man who escaped so lightly in court: "I cannot forgive him."

"For as long as I live the mere mention of that man's name will remind me of the pain I had to undergo because of my husband's death."

Sarah, 42, and her three children live in two mountain-side huts overlooking the fer-



ANC supporters celebrate their election victory (AFP photo)

Apartheid legacies — tears, jokes and profits

tile white farms of Levubu where she and her husband once worked.

"You cannot really know the suffering of farm labourers until you are on the farm," she told the Sowetan newspaper.

"Young white children used to call me 'kaffir' and shout at me." The word is the South African equivalent of "nigger."

But elsewhere, author Ben MacLennan has struck a vein among liberal whites with a book, "apartheid, the Lighter Side," a collection of true stories illustrating the crass stupidity or blatant injustice of blinkered racism.

An 80-year-old white man, in whose cupboard two Bantu

girls were found, appeared in a Bloemfontein court in 1970 on a charge of immorality across the racial line.

He denied guilt and said he had shut them in the cupboard "for fun". He was acquitted.

Or a 1966 decision by the South African National Council for the blind to reconstitute itself on an "apartheid" basis.

Or a riot policeman's successful explanation in Port Elizabeth court in 1987 for shooting dead a black youth at a funeral. "I acted in self-defence," said Adjutant Officer J.J. Erasmus. "They were singing in their own language and this causes riots."

A different payoff line is carried by a newsletter for pre-

cious metals dealers which says: "The tripling of political killings since Mr. Mandela's release in February 1990 has seen platinum's (price) premium over gold shrink inexorably."

There follows a graph indicating that as political killings rise, platinum's price lead over gold falls, with the comment:

"Since this human tragedy reflects expectations suppressed by three quarters of a century of apartheid, and decades of tribal rivalry before that, it is unlikely to cease in the days before or after Nelson Mandela waves a presidential wave from the steps of Pretoria's new parliament."

Saleh: 'National Identity' is a political illusion

By Adnan Siddiqi

BOSTON — "Identity is an illusion politicians create to hold disparate reality together," according to one prominent writer in African and Arab literature. "Writers, by definition, do not accept ready-made formula... in fact our stock in trade is a lack of certainty."

The words are those of 60-year-old Tayeb Saleh, author of the novels "Season of Migration to the North" and "The Wedding of Zein," who spoke recently at Boston University as the guest of the Sudan Studies Association's Third International Meeting here. According to American University of Beirut scholar Mona Amyuni (a conference participant), Tayeb Saleh ranks with Egypt's Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz among the "leading Arabic fiction writers of the 20th century."

National identity in the case of Sudan, with its multiple religions, languages, cultures and tribes, Mr. Saleh suggested, has been shaped not only by the "mischievous designs" of nationalist politicians, but also by historical circumstance. "Imagine what it would be like," he told an amused audience of over 200.

"If the French had defeated the British in the battle of Fashoda... Sudan would have had two identities. Southern Sudan would be a French colony, and Juba might now have its own 'Boulevard Charles de Gaulle'."

"It could have been very different," he added wryly, "and we would have lived in it just the same."

What then is the true identity of Sudan? "I really don't know," Mr. Saleh replied to a questioner. "Like (Kenyan writer) Ngugi and (Nigeria's) Achebe, I am always exploring the meaning of identity... Countries — like life — are messy, and cannot be ordered beyond a certain point."

Although now somewhat removed from the four-decades-long conflict between North and South — he has been in exile in London since the 1989 coup in Khartoum — Mr. Saleh said he remains particularly concerned about the creation of false dichotomies by politicians and journalists in describing the war.

The terms "Arab Muslim North" and "Christian South," he argued, "over-



Tayeb Saleh

emphasise only one part of reality... As a writer, I find these to be oversimplifications... useless and dangerous."

Besides the fact that there are significant Christian groups in the North and many Muslims in the South, the humanist argued, "there is no clear-cut thing as a Muslim or Arab or Negro. If someone only says 'I am a Muslim', I hope he understands what he means."

Comparing the ruling National Islamic Front in Khartoum and rebel groups in the South, Mr. Saleh said they have more in common than they admit publicly. The two elites in both parts of the country, he said, "went to the same English schools, speak the same language, and wear the same clothes... in fact they are essentially the same people. It baffles me therefore that they are so intent on proving themselves different."

In response to a question on possible solutions, Mr. Saleh said "one ought to look to the U.S. example... America is just as variant a mixture, yet it is united and trying to make diversity work. We (Sudanese) are not."

Among American literary figures, Mr. Saleh later told USIA in an interview,

Robert Frost was a particular inspiration. "A couple of lines (from a Frost poem) should be my motto," he said.

"They shall not come with speed and chariot to chide. My slowness with the speed, and scare me to one side."

Commenting on the verse, Mr. Saleh said that "people who take sides, on the whole, are scared, especially in political conflicts like we have in the Sudan now. They are scared, either from things they know, or things they imagine... Wars happen because of misconceptions and reciprocal fears. On the other hand, Frost reflects on the U.S. as 'a society of multiple elements, dynamic contradictions... which is trying to find solutions through goodwill. His poetry is full of love and goodwill'."

Though refusing to speculate on the future of Sudan, Mr. Saleh suggested that much of his prose foreshadowed the present: "Sometimes you can write something in 1960 which could happen in 1990. Those who read me carefully might find insights... in books written 20 years ago, of what is taking place now."

Has, then, the golden era of Sudanese literature indeed passed? Mr. Saleh modestly

replies in the negative. "In fact, we have not yet tasted a golden era in literature, or in anything," he said that the leadership in Sudan, even prior to the current regime, has "always obstructed" realistic fiction, but has failed to suppress it. He added that up-and-coming writers, such as Abdullahi Ali Isahq and Francis Deng, represent a pool of "great creative potential... and I am not finished yet either."

The African/Arab novel, Mr. Saleh predicts, is on the verge of attracting wide readership in the West, in the manner that translated Latin American writers like Borges and Marquez captured the imagination in the 1980's. "It may be the next wave," he said hopefully, "because I have a feeling that the novel in America and Europe has become too incestuous, (too) concerned with little issues, with some exceptions."

"In the Third World, the novel is doing what it has been invented to do — to discuss the big issues."

Commenting on the difficulties faced in the Islamic World and the Salman Rushdie case, Mr. Saleh said that Muslim writers such as Naguib Mahfouz and himself "have for a very long time been challenging certain taboos" and been banned for doing so. "I don't really know what is behind the over-dramatisation in the West of the works of Salman Rushdie. There is no denying he is a very talented writer, but this particular novel ('The Satanic Verses') is a boring novel... a bad work."

"I have a suspicion that this kind of false celebration is linked with false notions of Arabs and Muslims and the Third World in general," Mr. Saleh added. "People are ignorant, and writers like that may merely be confirming these prejudices, these preconceived ideas."

On the other hand, Mr. Rushdie's right to publish, according to Mr. Saleh, is indisputable. "I contributed to a book, published in French, in defence of Salman Rushdie," along with other, "mainly Arab and Muslim" writers defending his right to express himself, he told USIA. "Practically everybody said, 'Yes, we defend his right to speak and we do not agree that he should have a sentence passed on him'." Mr. Saleh said.

On Serb-Croat front, a woman raises chickens, and the dogs

By Dilip Ganguly
 The Associated Press

VINKOVCI, Croatia — As dusk falls on the uneasy front line outside her door, Vanka Matosevic counts her chickens, marshals her dog and two cats into her bedroom, says a prayer and goes to bed.

The war to the south in Bosnia is the focus of world attention these days. But things hardly have been settled here in neighbouring Croatia, where Serbs and Croats fought a six month war in 1991 that preceded the Bosnian conflict.

Serbs, Croats and outside experts all say it will be very difficult to bring peace to Bosnia — or to the Balkans as a whole — without peace here in Croatia between former Yugoslavia's two largest ethnic groups.

Serb soldiers are barely 500 metres away, across idled railroad tracks watched by U.N. peacekeepers and crossed by many street dogs, from Ms. Matosevic's two-storey bullet-pocked house in this town 218 km southeast of Zagreb.

At the ready is the old bicycle that saved Ms. Matosevic's life when Serbs attacked 2½ years ago.

"This is my home and I have no intention of moving out," says Ms. Matosevic, 55 and divorced, as she feeds corn to her 12 chickens. She is virtually alone in a desolate neighbourhood.

Sometimes, Croat soldiers drop by for coffee. In the debris-strewn no man's land nearby, one of the hottest front lines in the 1991 war in Croatia, a Russian soldier pats a street dog and offers him bread.

The strip is patrolled by 1,000 Russian and 650 Belgian U.N. peacekeepers and the street dogs roam from one camp to another, where they rummage through trash

can for scraps. The doors and walls of Ms. Matosevic's home are scarred with bullet holes like the face of a small pox victim. Parts of the roof and one of the rooms took direct hits and caved in.

Most people did not return to this neighbourhood after the fighting that broke out when Croatia seceded from Yugoslavia.

"I remember the days very well," says Ms. Matosevic, patting her dog and two cats, her only regular companions. "It was July 23, 1991, when my house took several direct hits, but I was not afraid. A day later Croat soldiers came and told me they were retreating. Even then I stayed back, but the night was horrible and I fled later on my bicycle."

The fighting ended in January 1992, but a third of the country still is held by Serbs, including Mirkovci across the tracks. Occasionally, small arms fire still punctures the peace at night. But a new ceasefire agreement was reached in March, and Croat and Serb commanders are meeting under U.N. auspices.

"We hold regular meetings to clear any suspicion or doubt between the two parties," said Brig. Gen. Willy Vandek of Belgium, the sector commander.

The Mirkovci-Vinkovci front is in one of four so-called U.N. protection areas set up under the 1992 truce in parts of Croatia seized by Serbs.

Croatia insists it will get the land back some day, but Serbs say they will never submit to rule from Zagreb.

Ms. Matosevic said she does not believe peace will return permanently to Vinkovci, a town of 30,000 people where hardly a building escaped damage in 1991.

But she is going to stay put, tend to her chickens and garden.

By Shahriar Shahid
 Reuter

DHAKA — Abject poverty and widespread unemployment have forced at least 50,000 men, women and children in Bangladesh to earn their bread by breaking used dry cells, exposing themselves to serious health hazards.

More than 8,000 families across the country, living in sub-human conditions, work 12 hours daily, hammering out zinc, manganese, plastic and carbon from tonnes of dry battery cells for recycling industries.

"We know this is bad for health, and particularly causes almost incurable skin disease," said Tajuddin, 18, breaking cells at a backstreet dump in the Bangladesh capital Dhaka.

"We work seven days a week for our mahajan (employer) who has allowed us to live on his land and pays two taka (five U.S. cents) for breaking per maund (37 kg) of batteries," he said.

"After all, I have a living now. The question of health or hygiene comes only in the second place," said the boy, fully coated in battery dust.

Tajuddin's family, like many others, has been doing the job for two decades. Each battery-breaker earns an average of 20 taka (50 U.S. cents) a day or an annual \$182.50.

That is above Bangladesh's annual per capita income of \$120, but at a high cost.

"My father died when I was eight. I remember he died one morning of severe chest pain," he said. "People said the dust was the killer."

Tajuddin's mother Saleha Begum, 38, sadly recollects: "I was young and just newly married when I migrated to Dhaka from a distant village trying to find some employment."

"I considered myself lucky when I was drafted into the army of battery breakers," she said.

Ms. Begum gave birth to five children in this compound where they have been provided with a shanty. Much of the place is buried under a thick layer of battery dust accumulated over years of production.

The battery breakers say they burn the zinc from the cells to make a liquid and



LITTLE TO LOOK FOR: Poverty-stricken Bangladeshis wait for help after one of the many natural catastrophes that hit the country (File photo)

Poverty pushes Bangladeshis to dangerous profession

then recompress it into bars. Majib, 45, a zinc and plastic burner, said his employer, who uses small children to collect used batteries, takes the lion's share of the money from sale of zinc bars to the city's scrap market.

The scrap dealers sell the zinc bars to the aluminium industries.

Tajuddin said the paste of manganese and carbon is also sold to unauthorised "medicine manufacturers" who use them for making skin ointments and tooth powders.

They sell it in open markets fully knowing that their products can harm, even kill, the users, one health official in Dhaka said.

"They do a booming business among the poor and often keep the unfriendly law enforcers off by paying a bribe," he added.

Experts say long-term exposure to chemicals like manganese and inhalation of fumes from the burning of battery waste damages kidneys and lungs, weakens bones and contributes to Parkinson's disease.

"Using manganese and carbon-made tooth powder or paste could be another deadly hazard for a vast multitude of (the) population," said one of Bangladesh's leading dentists, Arup Ratan Chowdhury.

He said though the powder will have an immediate shining effect on the teeth it gradually destroys the tooth's natural protective layer on the teeth, causing permanent decay.

Skin specialist Reza Bin Zaid said in Bangladesh,

where 30 per cent of the 110 million population have some kind of skin disorder, the use of carbon and manganese paste for curing skin disease was a serious threat to public health.

Though no detailed survey has yet been conducted on the use of these extremely hazardous ointments it is feared 80 per cent of the skin disease patients apply "cheaply available cures" which cause skin ulcers and even cancer, he said.

A scrap dealer, Noor

Mohammad, said medicine makers buy manganese and carbon bars in the black market and that a five kg bar costs only 20 taka (50 cents).

There are at least 1,000 dry cell breaking centres across the country and the number is rising because of growing demands for zinc, plastic and carbon.

Health ministry sources said they were aware of the illegal dry cell industry. They did not explain why the government has not tried to stop it.

that currently 'being experienced in the former Soviet Union.

Devaluation, accompanied by appropriate incentive measures, "should begin to restore investor confidence, so as to resuscitate dormant industries and stimulate new ones," the AFDG said.

Markets in rubber, cut flowers, vegetables and leather goods could be exploited, it said, and tourism might flourish again.

Not least, the CFA incomes of coffee- and cocoa-producers would increase, enabling them to diversify into a wider range of products, it added.

mothballed.

Big money must still be spent just to keep the oil fields going. "Aramco officials say the days when Saudi crude gushed from the sand for 10 cents a barrel are long gone. Production costs now are "in the area of a couple of dollars," one said.

but with the capacity programme completed, new cash may become available for Aramco to pursue an objective of locking in secure outlets for Saudi crude oil in overseas markets.

Strategy is to buy in to refineries and filling station chains around the world in a restructuring masterminded by Oil Minister Nazer. It aims to transform Aramco into a global and fully-integrated wellhead-to-forecourt oil multinational.

Foreign expansion began in 1988 when the Saudis bought a half share in Texaco's refining and sales operation in the U.S. East and Gulf coast states.

Aramco has a joint venture with South Korea's Ssangyong, has just acquired 40 per cent of Philippines refiner Petron and has talked to Sinochem in China about building a refinery.

The focus seems to have shifted to Asia. Oil demand is expanding most rapidly there and the region is already the destination of 40 per cent of Saudi oil exports.

His defence of the multi-lateral trade system came amid a continuing political storm over India's signing the GATT accord in Moscow.

kuna until an austerity drive began last October tamed inflation of near 2,000 per cent. Prices are now sinking and Zagreb hopes foreign credits will start flowing.

Kuna banknotes, printed in Germany, will be in denominations of five to 1,000. Croats will be able to exchange dinars for Kunas at a rate of 1,000-to-one until the end of 1994, without devaluation.

Croatian national heroes and martyrs dating to the Middle Ages are pictured on the new kuna notes.

After guiding Croatia to independence, Mr. Tudjman stirred outrage — mainly in the West — by appearing to rehabilitate the fascist past and whitewash Ustaša crimes.

He minimised the number of Serb and Jewish victims at the Ustaša's Jasenovac death camp, named an ex-Ustaša

BRINGS BACK A LOT OF MEMORIES FOR YOU, HUH, MA'AM?

Schaefer

LONDON (R)—British consumers took on a record amount of credit in March, suggesting people remained confident ahead of a huge increase in personal taxes in April.

Figures from the Central Statistical Office showed Britons took on a net £516 million (\$771.5 million) of new credit, the highest monthly figure on record and well ahead of the net £336 million (\$502.4 million) borrowed in February.

Economists, who forecast an average rise in net credit of just £350 million (\$523.3 million), said the figures suggested the recovery was proceeding steadily.

"The figures demonstrate the considerable strength of consumer activity in the lead up to April's tax rises and adds to our confidence that even allowing for the taxes, British economic growth will continue strong this year," said Marian Bell, economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Ever since the ruling Conservatives moved last November to push taxes sharply higher to help balance public finances many economists have been concerned the recovery could be hit.

But evidence from a range of economic indicators in March and early April appears to suggest consumers are relaxed about the extra £8.0 billion (\$11.96 billion) of taxes being levied this year, and are set to spend throughout this year.

And with increasing signs the residential housing market is at last recovering from a four-year recession which saw prices tumble as much as 30 per cent, economists are confident consumer sentiment will prove robust despite higher taxes in 1994.

British base rates stand at 5.25 per cent, with little prospect of a cut unless consumers do start to recoil in the face of the sharp tax increases.

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argentin

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FLOYT

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

BELLI

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

BANCOR

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

CUSCOT

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

WHAT THE AMATEUR
ROCKETEERS CALLED
THEMSELVES.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer, A “□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □” □ □ □ □ □ □

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: MERGE BYLAW MEASLY PLURAL

Answer: Why they stayed away from the boss —

THE Daily Crossword by C.F. Murray

ACROSS
 1 Bob
 5 Diver with a tank
 10 Da — (musical direction)
 14 Paradise lost
 15 Fruit of the fir
 16 Dilly
 17 The Yellow Brick —
 18 Solos
 19 Sch. sub.
 20 Misspook
 21 Lots of moola
 23 — and penates
 24 Lushurious
 26 Cried
 28 Damp
 30 Part of a sign-off
 31 Mercedes's capital
 32 Harper Valley
 35 Title opener
 36 Glossy fabric
 37 Bound
 38 Ringed
 39 Davis or Milder
 40 Division of a dance poem
 41 Contract
 42 Poured down
 43 Morgages
 44 Inevitable
 46 Blame the next guy
 47 Reaward
 48 Silver and gold sources
 53 Car — also
 54 Exclusively
 55 Grimm monster
 56 Parts
 57 Jeopardy
 58 Vilen's look
 59 Itters
 60 — ply

DOWN

1 Student response
 2 Resolute
 3 Olan's creator
 4 Frightened
 5 Apparels
 6 Dilly
 7 The Yellow Brick —
 8 Solos
 9 Sch. sub.
 10 Misspook
 11 Lots of moola
 12 — and penates
 13 Lushurious
 15 Fruit of the fir
 16 Dilly
 17 The Yellow Brick —
 18 Solos
 19 Sch. sub.
 20 Misspook
 21 Lots of moola
 22 — and penates
 23 Lushurious
 24 Cried
 25 Damp
 26 Part of a sign-off
 27 Mercedes's capital
 28 Harper Valley
 29 Title opener
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 31 Bound
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 34 Division of a dance poem
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 36 Poured down
 37 Morgages
 38 Inevitable
 39 Blame the next guy
 40 Reaward
 41 Silver and gold sources
 42 Car — also
 43 Exclusively
 44 Grimm monster
 45 Parts
 46 Jeopardy
 47 Vilen's look
 48 Itters
 49 — ply

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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

40 Armatizado
 41 — Antilles
 42 School break
 43 Big
 44 Grenoble's river
 46 Office resource
 47 Sufficient, to a
 48 Anger
 49 Pennant
 50

Economy

[illegible]

Rwanda's Coffee industry grinds to a halt

Africa coffee chief says instability threatens industry

KAMPALA (R) — Higher coffee prices have raised hopes of recovery for the industry in Africa but political upheaval, poor quality and financial constraints could wipe out any gains, the chairman of the Inter-African Coffee Organisation (IACO) said.

Richard Kajukuja, also Uganda's minister of cooperatives, trade and marketing, told Reuters that output was still falling for the moment, and Africa's share of global coffee trade has fallen to 20 per cent from 30 per cent in the 1970's.

"Prices have risen beyond anyone's imagination. We've had a remarkable turnaround in the industry. It has been unprecedented," Mr. Kajukuja said in an interview.

Mr. Kajukuja spoke to Reuters Friday, after news that coffee prices had continued their relentless rise, jumping more than eight per cent to the highest level in five years.

The minister said the current price trend would enable Africa to recoup some losses incurred since a market-regulating coffee pact collapsed in July

things in the hands of consumers," he said.

Economists and industry experts say the rise in prices would boost Africa's earnings for this year from 1993's \$1 billion to between \$1.4 and \$1.8 billion this year.

But Mr. Kajukuja said the gains in coffee prices were threatened by political instability on the continent, poor coffee quality and financial constraints resulting from structural adjustment.

"Instability remains a major challenge to the coffee industry in Africa. It has contributed heavily to low production and poor quality," Mr. Kajukuja, a former banker and leading businessman, said.

He declined to name the countries but officials said he was referring to war in neighbouring Rwanda and chaos in Burundi, Angola and Zaire — all producers of coffee.

Mr. Kajukuja said IACO would work out a mechanism by which to monitor the quality of coffee, presently done by individual countries.

Meanwhile, traders say that

as you very well know. They will not be able to do so because either they are dead or in refugee or displaced people's camps in the country and outside the country," a trader said.

The latest conflict in the small Central African state, in which an estimated 200,000 people have died, erupted after President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed by a rocket attack on his plane on April 6.

Outside Kibungu, a Rwandan town captured by Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) rebels a week ago, a Reuters correspondent saw abandoned coffee fields. Most were becoming overgrown with weeds.

The fighting has also destroyed warehouses and milling plants. The southern coffee-growing area of Butare — where most of Rwanda's prime coffee is grown — has seen some of the worst violence in the fighting, the traders said.

Marketing of coffee was brought to a complete halt after the RPF captured the border town of Rusumo last week, depriving the industry of

Primary market retains vividness as organised market of AFM slumps in first quarter of '94

By Samir Shaqfeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the total value of shares issued at the primary market was rising in the first quarter of this year, the trading volume at the organised market for the Amman Financial Market (AFM) was declining.

According to the AFM's Monthly Statistical Bulletin for the month of March, the total value of shares issued at the primary market during the January-March period of 1994 was JD 75.2 million, 288 per cent higher than the JD 19.4 million recorded in the first quarter of 1993.

A breakdown by each month shows JD 36.4 million (JD 12.5 million in 1993) in January, JD 26.5 million (JD 4.8 million) in February and JD 12.3 million (JD 2.1 million) in March.

There were neither development nor corporate bonds issued during the periods under review.

Organised market

Trading at the organised market during the first quarter of this year was 19.5 per cent, or JD 43.6 million, below the volume achieved in the January-March period of 1993. In other words, the total trading volume at the end of March 1993 was JD 223.4 million, while the total figure for the first three months of 1994 was JD 179.8 million.

The drop was most pronounced in January when the fall amounted to JD 37.7 million or 85 per cent of the total decline. The remaining loss came in February as the fall amounted to JD 7.2 million, or 15 per cent.

Number of shares

Regarding the number of shares traded, all first three months of this year showed a decline, the figures

to JD 469 million. Also, in terms of the number of shares traded, the figure for the first three months of this year stood at 26.6 million shares, 129 per cent above the comparable period of last year when the figure was only 11.6 million shares.

The number of contracts in this sector stood at 33,807 (13,579 in 1993 first quarter).

B) Insurance sector:

Contrary to the banks and finance sector, the activity in trading shares of insurance companies was higher in the first quarter of last year, as the volume amounted to JD 11.6 million and the number of shares to 3.1 million through 4,003 contracts.

During January-March 1994, the volume, number of shares and number of contracts were far less than the same period of 1993, at JD 3.5 million, one million shares and 1,243 contracts.

C) Services sector:

The gap was as wide in this area as in the previous two categories since the figures for the first quarter of 1994 were less than 1993 (JD 23.4 million and 12.7 million volume, 8.4 million shares (12.3 million shares) in number of shares and 12,880 contracts (13,776 contracts) in number of contracts.

D) Industrial sector:

Worst hit in the first quarter of this year was trading in industrial shares as it recorded a JD 64.4 million volume, a decline of 53.3 per cent from the JD 137.8 million in the corresponding period of 1993.

The decline in the number of shares traded was similar, falling to 15.6 million shares from 36.8 million shares, or a 57.7 per cent decline. Also dropping was the number of contracts which declined by 45.3 per cent to 24,778 contracts from 45,427 contracts.

Financial Markets **Jordan Times**
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	New York Close Date: 6/5/94	Tokyo Close Date: 6/5/94
Sterling Pound*	1.4930	1.4903
Deutsche Mark	1.6685	1.6680
Swiss Franc	1.4140	1.4150
French Franc	5.7005	5.6958**
Japanese Yen	102.87	102.41
European Currency Unit	1.1580	1.1593**

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 9/5/1994

U.S. Dollar	4.0000	4.4400	4.7500	5.2500
Sterling Pound	4.8800	5.0000	4.0600	5.5000
Deutsche Mark	5.0000	4.8800	4.8700	4.8100
Swiss Franc	5.7500	3.7500	5.7500	5.7500
French Franc	5.6300	5.5000	5.3800	5.3800
Japanese Yen	2.0000	2.0600	2.1900	2.3800
European Currency Unit	5.7500	5.5000	5.5000	5.6200

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 9/5/1994

Currency	Mar	Oct
U.S. Dollar	0.6980	0.7000
Sterling Pound	1.0403	1.0455
Deutsche Mark	0.4191	0.4212
Swiss Franc	0.4926	0.4951
French Franc	0.1223	0.1229
Japanese Yen ^a	0.6799	0.6833
Dutch Guilder	0.3734	0.3755
Swedish Krona	0.4400	0.4400
Italian Lira ^b	0.0437	0.0439
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

Pr 100

Other Currencies Date: 9/5/1994

Habrazai Dinar	1.8360	1.8480
Lebanese Lira*	0.040230	0.041660
Saudi Riyal	0.1858	0.1880
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3250	2.3550
Qatari Riyal	0.1895	0.1904
Egyptian Pound	0.1950	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7440	1.8090
UAE Dirham	0.1895	0.1904
Greek Drachma*	0.2635	0.3175
Cypriot Pound	1.2875	1.3975

* Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on admission on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3798/08	Canadian dollars
	1.6578/88	Deutschemarks
	1.8606/16	Dutch guilders
	1.4152/42	Swiss francs
	34.10/14	Belgian francs
	5.6790/40	French francs
	1589.40/9	Italian lire
	102.52/62	Japanese yen
	7.6600/00	Swedish crowns
	7.1890/40	Norwegian crowns
	6.4830/80	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.4948/58	
One ounce of gold	\$381.20/\$381.60	

price down to historic lows, leading some farmers to abandon their coffee crops.

"As this trend (world prices) goes on, the government sector has completely collapsed. The traders said functions at the early state-owned

we could easily deliver some, but not all of them," he added.

Economists say Africa lost up to \$1 billion a year in coffee earnings after the price crash in 1989.

Mr. Kaijuka said shortage of stocks aside, coffee prices had risen largely due to a retention scheme agreed by producers in Uganda in October last year to keep up to 20 per cent of their exports off the market.

"We have demonstrated that even we producers can change the way things are normally handled. The present price levels would never have been achieved had we left

Rwandan coffee also some export of coffee had stopped completely after rebels captured north and eastern Rwanda.

"No Rwandan coffee is being harvested, no coffee is being milled and no coffee is being marketed at the moment," a Uganda-based trader told Reuters.

Fighting in the capital Kigali has also brought Rwandex head-office operations to a standstill.

Farmers should have begun picking coffee last month in readiness for the start of the 1994/95 season exports in June.

"But they never started and

first drove out government troops from northern Rwanda. There is still an export route through Burundi, but instability in that country meant no smooth transportation of the crop can be guaranteed, traders said.

"It's what I call a complete collapse. You cannot call it anything else," another trader based in the Kenyan capital Nairobi told Reuters.

Last month, traders said output in Rwanda would fall below the 1994/95 estimated levels of 28,000 tonnes. But most now agreed it is unwise to even talk about figures at the moment.

On a quarter to quarter basis, the drop in the number of shares traded was 12.3 million shares as the total for the first three months of this year amounted

Number of contracts	Bookvalue and market capitalisation
<p>During January-March this year, a total of 72,708 contracts were executed, 4,077 less than the first quarter of last year.</p>	<p>In a table shown in the AFM Monthly Statistical Bulletin, the total bookvalue of the listed companies at the organised market amounted to JD 1,450.2 million while the total market capitalisation stood at JD 3,525.0 million at the end of March 1994.</p>
<p>On a monthly basis, the number of contracts for 1994 was 32,352 in January (36,680 in January 1993), 20,798 contracts in February (21,565 contracts) and 19,358 contracts in March (18,540 contracts).</p>	<p>A breakdown by sector shows (1) banks and finance sector having a bookvalue of JD 666.9 million and a market capitalisation of (JD 1,498 million), (2) insurance sector having a bookvalue of JD 35.0 million (JD 85.2 million), (3) services sector with a bookvalue of JD 83.6 million (JD 227.6 million) and (4) industrial sector with a bookvalue of JD 644.8 million (JD 1,714.2 million).</p>
<p>An analysis of the trading volume and number of shares by sector in the first quarter of 1994 and 1993 reveal the following:</p>	<p>At the end of March 1993, the total bookvalue of the various sectors was JD 1,190 million, but the market capitalisation was JD 2,554.4 million.</p>
<p>A) Banks and finance sector:</p>	
<p>Trading volume in the first quarter of this year was 88.5 per cent higher than the volume of first quarter 1993; the amount stood at JD 88.4 million, compared</p>	

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George Peppard

Actor George Peppard dies at 65

LOS ANGELES (R) — George Peppard, who starred as a romantic leading man in the film classic *Breakfast at Tiffany's* but may be best remembered as a mercenary in the hit TV series *The A-Team*, has died of pneumonia. He was 65.

Peppard, once a two-pack-a-day smoker, died Sunday night after suffering "respiratory complications" at the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Centre, hospital officials said. He was admitted last week with breathing problems.

Peppard had quit smoking in 1992 when doctors removed a cancerous tumour from his right lung he had been in remission.

In a career spanning more than three decades, the tall, silver-haired actor appeared in 29 films, playing everything from a cool-headed detective to a dashing flying ace. He often lamented being typecast as tough, unfeeling character.

But among the younger generation, Peppard is best known as Colonel John Hannibal Smith, fearless leader of the *A-Team*, a band of do-good mercenaries who wreaked more carnage in prime-time than any series during their run in the 1980s.

Born in Detroit the son of a building contractor and an opera singer, Peppard worked at odd jobs on Wall Street and drove a taxi so he could afford to pay for lessons in "method acting" from legendary acting teacher Lee Strasberg.

He was so confident of immediate success that he demanded an unlisted telephone number, but he had to reply mostly on bit parts until he began receiving bigger roles in television dramas and on Broadway.

Peppard made his film debut in *The Strange One* in 1957 and then appeared in *Pork Chop Hill* in 1958 and *Home From The Hill* in 1960.

But his big break came when he was cast opposite Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, playing the wealthy charmer who sweeps a small-town girl off her feet on her trip to New York.

As his film career waned in the 1970s, Peppard returned to television. He starred in the NBC detective show *Banacek* from 1972 to 1974 and the medical drama *Doctors' Hospital* from 1975 to 1976.

Only 16 days into filming the pilot for *Dynasty*, which would go on to become one of television's biggest hits, Peppard was replaced by Jon Forsythe in the role of multimillionaire Blake Carrington. He was rumoured to have had creative differences with the series' producers.

Just when he thought he would end up on the dinner-table circuit, Peppard was offered what he called "one of the best roles of my career" — commanding the *A-Team*.

NBC introduced *The A-Team* in 1983 and it quickly became the network's most popular series of the season.

It was slammed by the critics and the National Coalition on Television Violence for what they said was a display of mayhem unmatched by any other prime-time series — 34 acts of violence per hour.

But the series, which also starred jewelry-bedecked action hero Mr. T, was a huge success with viewers. It stayed on the air until 1986 and remains popular in syndication worldwide.

U.N.: Serb arms still present in Gorazde

SARAJEVO (R) — The commander of United Nations troops in Gorazde said Monday he believed the Serbs still had heavy weapons within the 20-kilometre weapons exclusion zone around the Bosnian Muslim town, in defiance of a NATO ultimatum.

"I am quite certain that there are still heavy weapons being held within the zone," he said by radio link from Gorazde.

A three-week Serb assault on the town ended last month after NATO threatened the Serbs with air strikes.

Under the agreement ending the fighting, the Serbs were meant to pull all their forces back from a three kilometre zone around the town and remove all their heavy weapons from the 20-kilometre zone or face air strikes.

The U.N. commander in Gorazde, Lieutenant-Colonel David Santa-Olalla, said the Serbs still had between 100 and 150 police in the three-kilometre zone.

U.N. officials say the police are in fact soldiers who have just changed their uniforms.

U.N. Protection Force spokesman Eric Chaperon said Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic had assured the U.N.'s head of civil affairs Sergio Vieira De Mello at the weekend that the troops would

pull out of the Muslim enclave but nothing happened.

"We are still waiting for the movement," Maj. Chaperon said.

He said the Serb police, known as Militia, were actually soldiers who had changed their green uniforms for blue and by their presence in the zone were in breach of the terms of the Gorazde ceasefire agreement.

"These militia are not in fact real policemen," Maj. Chaperon said.

Bosnia's Muslim-led government has refused to restart peace negotiations with the Serbs until they fully comply with the NATO ultimatum for them to withdraw.

Meanwhile, U.N. forces in the Bosnian capital have failed to locate a Bosnian Serb tank secreted in a Sarajevo suburb since late Friday, Maj. Chaperon said Monday.

U.N. military observers continued to patrol the Grbavica sector, and if the tank was found UNPROFOR would go and fetch it, Maj. Chaperon said.

Another U.N. officer noted the Serbs were letting very few military observers into the area.

The tank, probably a T-34, disappeared late Friday while being transported on a truck from Bosnian Serb headquarters at Pale in violation of the 20-kilometre (12.5-mile) exclu-

sion zone ordered by NATO to bar heavy weaponry around Sarajevo.

Maj. Chaperon reported rising tension at Mostar in the south, and some mortar fire at Celic and Visoko in the north-east.

Russian nationalist politician Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said Sunday that if Russia was asked it could send enough troops to restore order in the Balkans in a month.

The leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party told a news conference after arriving in Belgrade that he was against military intervention in the two-year-old war in the former Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia.

But he added that "at the invitation of the Yugoslav and Serb side" Russia could send "a powerful contingent of 100,000 to 300,000 troops, and maybe more, which could restore order in the Balkans within a month."

Mr. Zhirinovskiy will meet several politicians before he leaves Tuesday. They include Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

In a separate development, Croat and Muslim negotiators Monday began a third round of U.S.-brokered talks on setting up a Bosnian Federation and seemed to be heading for agreement.

Angola rebels lose provincial capital

LISBON (R) — The Angolan rebel movement UNITA has acknowledged the loss after fierce fighting of Ndalatando, a provincial capital in north-western Angola, but it played down the strategic importance of the battle.

UNITA said in a statement faxed to Reuters from Washington at the weekend that the capital of Cuanza North province, 250 kilometres east of Luanda, fell to government forces last Wednesday.

But it quoted UNITA's representative in the United

States, Jardo Muekalia, as saying: "Towns have changed hands often in the course of fighting between the two sides... neither side can win a military victory."

"The government's taking of Ndalatando does not change the fact that the Angolan conflict can be resolved at the negotiating table," Mr. Muekalia said.

UNITA radio reported Sunday that heavy clashes were still taking place in and around Ndalatando, which govern-

ment radio said was in army hands.

UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) has been fighting a bush war since independence from Portugal in 1975. A 1991 peace agreement fell apart after UNITA rejected its defeat in U.N.-supervised elections a year later.

The United Nations has been mediating fresh peace talks between UNITA and the government in Lusaka since last November.

Rwandan rebels push for Kigali in heavy fighting

NAIROBI (AP) — Rebels stepped up their push for the Rwandan capital Monday, pounding government positions near the airport and on the eastern side of Kigali with an intense barrage of heavy artillery and mortar fire.

One round exploded on the airport tarmac, forcing U.N. officials to turn back a relief flight en route from Nairobi and close the airport, said U.N. spokesman Abdul Kabia in Kigali.

Intense fighting also was reported near Ruhengeri in the northwest, where U.N. officials say the rebels are advancing despite stiff resistance from government forces.

Maj. Gen. Paul Kagame, chairman of the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), said earlier that the lull in fighting around Kigali was to give the rebels time to consolidate their positions near Ruhengeri, about 75 kilometres from Kigali.

Rebels also were driving on Bugesera and Kanzenze, about 25 kilometres southwest of Kigali.

The fighting between the majority Hutu, who dominate the army and the government, and the minority Tutsi, who lead the rebel movement, began after the president died in

a plane crash in Kigali on April 6. The president of neighbouring Burundi also died in the crash. Both men were Hutus.

In the past month, some 100,000 to 200,000 people have been killed, and 1.3 million have fled their homes, according to the United Nations and aid agencies. About 300,000 have fled to four neighbouring countries.

Rebel guns Monday morning shattered the eerie calm that had descended on the capital Sunday after five days of intense fighting that saw the rebels make substantial gains in Kigali.

"They are using very, very heavy artillery," said Mr. Kabia. "The blasts shake all the buildings around where they hit."

Besides closing the airport, the shelling also has disrupted the delivery of food to thousands of displaced people under U.N. protection in the capital.

Mr. Kabia said the rebels contend that ethnic massacres of Tutsi civilians are continuing in the countryside in parts of southern Rwanda still controlled by the government.

However, he said, U.N. observers cannot get access to the areas and cannot confirm.

Pyongyang accuses Seoul over weapons 'provocation'

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea Monday accused the South Korean authorities of carrying out "a grave military provocation" by sending heavy guns and soldiers into the buffer zone between the rivals.

The official Korean central news agency (KCNA) said a South Korean armoured vehicle had entered the demilitarised zone Sunday and its gun was in a firing position facing North.

The agency added, in a dispatch monitored in Tokyo, that on May 1, May 3 and May 4, recoilless guns and heavy machine guns were set up.

It accused the South Korean army of embarking on "a war frenzy" on May 5 by firing 70 rounds of ammunition from a heavy machine gun.

The following day "hundreds of armed bandits" took part in "a frantic war exercise against the North."

Meanwhile, China has assured South Korea and the United States that it would take "resolute measures" against North Korea if it broke its pledge not to develop nuclear arms, the Mainichi newspaper reported Monday.

The newspaper, quoting a senior U.S. official, said the no-bomb pledge had been made by North Korean President Kim Il-Sung when he met with China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping during a visit to China in October 1991.

The pledge has been made known by a Chinese leader to South Korean President Kim Young-Sam and Robert Galucci, the U.S. assistant secretary for political and military affairs, when they visited Beijing recently, the U.S. official said.

In a separate development, South Korea appealed Monday for North Korea to resume stalled Red Cross talks on arranging reunions of families separated since the Korean War.

The appeal came in an address by Kang Young-Hoon, president of the South Korean Red Cross, at a ceremony marking "World Red Cross Day."

Mr. Kang said North Korea should unconditionally resume talks to allow exchanges of hometown visits by elderly parents across the heavily fortified border.

Cuban pilot diverts plane to Miami

MIAMI (R) — A Cuban commercial airline pilot flying 16 tourists to the Bahamas locked himself in the cockpit and diverted the plane to Miami, where the pilot asked for political asylum Sunday, federal agents said.

The Cuban airliner landed about 5:15 p.m. edt (2115 GMT) at Miami International Airport, the latest in a string of Cuban-owned military and commercial aircraft that have fled to Florida.

The 16 passengers aboard the plane were described as vacationers, who were on a scheduled flight from Havana to Nassau, Bahamas, a spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said.

The group of passengers, who had initially been described by agents as British and Canadian tourists, were later identified as five Bahamians, five U.S. citizens, two Italians, two Spaniards, one Canadian and one Colombian, the FBI said.

Also aboard were the Cuban pilot and six crew members. The airplane, bearing the Cubana logotype, was a Soviet-made Ilyushin IL-18 turbo-prop AN-25 RV, a commercial craft that can hold up to 30 passengers, federal agents said.

The 16 tourists were released by officials late Sunday to continue their vacations, the FBI said.

The pilot, Basilio Garcia-breto, was turned over to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalisation and he'll be released to her sometime tonight, said INS spokesman Lemar Woolley. "The rest of the crew apparently wants to fly the plane back."

Federal agents said the pilot used a screwdriver to lock the rest of the crew out of the cockpit in order to divert the plane to Miami.

"There was no one in the cockpit but the pilot. He used no violence, but merely flew the aircraft," said FBI spokesman Paul Miller.

A brief scuffle broke out between the pilot and his crew after landing in Miami, but U.S. officials quickly broke it up, according to witnesses quoted on local television.

After landing in Miami, some members of the Cuban crew apologised for the pilot's actions, passengers said.



Panamanian presidential candidate Ernesto Perez Balladares (left) accompanied by his wife Dora, greets supporters at his Panama City headquarters after declaring victory in Panama.

ma's first presidential election since the U.S. invasion that toppled Manuel Noriega (AFP photo)

Perez Balladares declares victory in Panama

PANAMA CITY (R) — Wealthy businessman Ernesto Perez Balladares was headed for victory in Panama's presidential elections Sunday in a stunning comeback for his party, ousted from power by the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama.

With just over half of the ballots tallied, Mr. Perez Balladares declared victory at his campaign headquarters after the electoral tribunal showed him ahead with 33.3 per cent of the vote.

"The results we've received signify we've won the elections of 1994," Mr. Perez Balladares told a cheering crowd.

The widow of a three-time Panamanian President Arnulfo Arias, Mireia Moscoso De Gruber, of the ruling Alianza Democratica had 27.9 per cent of the vote, upsetting political newcomer and singer and actor Ruben Blades who trailed in third place.

"I'm not accepting anything until we have the full results," Mr. Blades, best known to American audiences through his role in the Hollywood film *The Milagro Beanfield War*, told his disappointed supporters.

Police said the general election, the first since the U.S. invasion and the freest in nearly three decades, was not marred by the turmoil that has characterised previous electoral contests in this Central American country.

"Panamanians are saying the dark days are behind us and we are looking to the future," Mr. Perez Balladares said.

A former finance minister, he was the favoured candidate going into the election despite the association of his party, the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), with ousted strongman Manuel Noriega.

The silver-haired candidate, nicknamed "the bull" because of his bulky frame, distanced himself from Gen. Noriega and evoked instead the memory of a more popular PRD leader, the late General Omar Torrijos who ruled Panama through the 1970s and founded the Populist Party in 1979.

In addition to tapping into the PRD's traditional support base in the countryside and in the lower ranks of the civil service, Mr. Perez Balladares wooed workers with a Populist platform promising to lower Panama's high jobless rate.

Some voters said they backed the PRD because they felt abandoned by the U.S.-installed government of President Guillermo Endara, who is widely viewed as having failed to root out drug-trafficking and corruption in Panamanian politics.

Yeltsin: Russia should be respected

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin took the opportunity of World War II Victory Day celebrations Monday to warn the world to respect Russia and to tell his political opponents at home to unite with him to preserve peace.

"Victory Day was perhaps the happiest day in the 20th century and it was courageous Red Army soldiers who brought this happiness to the world," Mr. Yeltsin said, addressing a grand rally at Moscow's War Memorial.

"Everyone should remember that Russia should be addressed with all respect," he added. "It would not accept any other language from any country in the world."

Mr. Yeltsin was speaking to tens of thousands of Muscovites, who defied bad weather to show up at the half-built Soviet-era memorial for the show, which included an air display.

"I feel a bit awkward," said

Grigory Pyatchenko, 75, a veteran of the Battle of Stalingrad, referring to the tricolour that has replaced the red banners of the Communist past.

"We fought under different banners and I don't think it's appropriate to replace them just like that."

Mr. Yeltsin has failed to persuade key political opponents, including Communists as well as some liberal and centrist parties, to join a civil accord pact he introduced last month to stop violence returning to Russian politics.

Many of Mr. Yeltsin's foes do not hide their plans to challenge his power soon. Former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi predicted Mr. Yeltsin's government would be out of power by the time of next year's 50th anniversary Victory Day celebrations.

"The 50th anniversary of the victory over fascist Germany will be celebrated in complete-

ly different conditions," Ekho Moskvy Radio quoted him as saying.

"The police, anti-people regime will no longer exist." Only a few thousand people turned up at the opposition rally spearheaded by Mr. Rutskoi, who was imprisoned for his leading role in an anti-Yeltsin mutiny in Moscow last October and released under a parliamentary amnesty in February.

Addressing the official rally, Mr. Yeltsin reminded his people the Soviet-era purges launched before the war by dictator Josef Stalin had failed to destroy the unity of the people.

"We were united in the great war. We can be united now in civil peace," Mr. Yeltsin said. "Let those who want to ruin the civil peace remember Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh," he added in a reference to bloody regional conflicts inherited from the ex-Soviet Union.

Aristide manipulates rights abuses - report

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his supporters "consistently" exaggerate or invent human rights abuses in Haiti for propaganda purposes, according to a cable sent by the U.S. embassy in Haiti, the New York Times reported Monday.

The cable, sent on April 12 to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, said that although there is a noticeable increase in violence in Haiti in recent months especially by the police, the situation is not as desperate as reported locally.

"The Haitian left, including President Aristide and his supporters in Washington and here, consistently manipulate or even fabricate human rights abuses as propaganda tools," according to the 10-page cable.

State Department spokeswoman Sandra McCarty said the cable was part of a series of communications "intended to give a balanced treatment of a complex human rights situation."

U.S. President Bill Clinton, citing an alarming rise in political violence in Haiti, said Sunday he would end the controversial U.S. policy of immediate repatriation of Haitian emigrants intercepted at sea.

The policy change will allow Haitians to be screened on ships or in third countries to determine if their claims for U.S. political asylum are valid.

The White House policy reversal granting Haitian refugees asylum hearings at sea was welcomed in Haiti Sunday, even as Haiti's military ruler rejected U.N. efforts to have

him step aside.

But as refugee advocates were cautiously applauding President Clinton's new approach to refugees seeking to enter the United States, analysts said it could lead to an increase in the number of would-be emigrants.

Their reaction came on a day when Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras, in an interview with NBC Television, seemed to reject a new United Nations ultimatum aimed at forcing the return of President Aristide.

Gen. Cedras told Meet The Press it was time for people to "get back to their senses... on our side we have always favoured dialogue since the beginning of the crisis."

"The sanctions are not a policy," he added in French.

Referendum pressure adds to Major's woes

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major faced pressure Monday to promise a referendum on the next stage of European integration in a desperate gamble to unite his fractious Conservative Party and shore up his leadership.

Mr. Major was meeting senior colleagues Monday to plot his strategy for European Parliament elections on June 9 amid speculation that a repeat of the Conservatives' rout in last week's local council elections could cost the premier his job.

Backers of a referendum covering issues such as European Monetary Union see it as a way to stop the running conflict within the Conservative Party over Britain's place in Europe.

"This is the only way to resolve this argument. There are two wings in the Conservative Party who have different views on this. This is contributing to John Major's own per-

sonal difficulties, and the way out of this is for him to put this issue to the people," said Norman Lamont, whom Mr. Major sacked as chancellor of the exchequer (finance minister) last year.

Mr. Major is cool to the idea, insisting it would be up to parliament to decide whether Britain should join a single currency, and the conflicting reactions of senior Conservatives suggest a referendum would merely deepen the party's divisions.

Welsh Secretary John Redwood and Home Secretary Michael Howard, the interior minister, refused to rule out the idea. The two men are unenthusiastic about deeper European integration.

But Kenneth Clarke, the present chancellor of the exchequer and a committed European, ruled out the proposal.

"The difficulty... is that when you have a referendum, people do not answer the ques-

tion in front of them," he said Sunday.

Mr. Clarke said this was the experience of France and Denmark, which held referenda in 1992 to ratify the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. Denmark, which at first rejected the pact, won approval only after it won concessions from its 11 EU partners.

Another pro-European member of the cabinet, Employment Secretary David Hunt, sided with Mr. Clarke. He said Monday the question of a referendum did not arise.

Pressure for a referendum originated with Conservative anti-British "Euro-sceptics" who fear a constitutional review in 1996 of Maastricht will force Britain to surrender more of its sovereignty to the Executive Commission in Brussels.

But the idea has drawn support from some pro-European Conservatives and from the minority Liberal Democrats.

Gay soldiers: U.S. military misuses new policy

NEW YORK (R) — The first two months of the Clinton administration's new policy regarding gays in the U.S. military has made life worse for many gay soldiers, the New York Times reported in its Monday editions. The "don't ask, don't tell" policy was supposed to allow gay men and lesbians to serve without fear of prosecution if they kept sexual orientation private. But the New York Times said gay and lesbian soldiers around the country told of commanders using the broad new authority granted under the policy to ferret out homosexuals. "The early signs aren't great," Democratic Representative Barney Frank told the newspaper. The Massachusetts congressman is one of two openly gay members of Congress. The newspaper reported that the military services had discharged more than 125 people for homosexuality since the new rules took effect on Feb. 26, though it added that evidence on discharge proceedings remained preliminary and anecdotal. Most wanted to leave the service and involved administrative discharges, the newspaper said. But an unnamed senior Defence Department official told the New York Times that the Pentagon had concerns about reports of "overaggressive enforcement" and had started to prevent what he said could be widespread violations.

Thailand may write off Schindler's List

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thailand's censorship board will ban Oscar-winning Schindler's List unless the film's distributor cuts a love scene in which actors appear nude, a United International Pictures (UIP) official said Monday. The demand has raised the possibility the film will be pulled entirely. Steven Spielberg's epic of a German industrialist who smuggles more than 1,000 Jews in safety during World War II has won raves from critics and seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture. But the board, citing its standards for nudity, said that one scene in which two characters make love must be left on the cutting room floor. UIP, the sole distributor of the film, is bound by Spielberg's unprecedented prerequisite that the film be shown unaltered in any way. Unless the board changes its decision, the UIP official said, the film will have to be pulled. UIP has petitioned the board and asked it to reconsider, the official added, saying a final answer is expected Wednesday. Spielberg's exacting standards have clashed with Asian film mores in several countries already. Malaysia banned Schindler's List, then grudgingly relented. The Philippines censorship board voted to cut certain scenes until President Fidel Ramos issued a decree to show the film in its entirety. Indonesia, where some Muslim organisations contend the film demonstrates morals and actions which run counter to the Indonesian way of life, remains undecided. Another Oscar-winning film now making the rounds in Bangkok, *The Piano*, is being shown at its full length, with scenes involving nudity smeared into obscurity with petroleum jelly.

One suspect freed after The Scream recovery

OSLO (R) — Norwegian police said Sunday they had released one of three people arrested when Edvard Munch's masterpiece *The Scream* was found at the weekend. National Television said the freed man was an art dealer who had actually helped set up the delicate "sting" operation which recovered the priceless 1893 painting. The dealer's lawyer said his arrest had most likely been "a breakdown in communications" but police declined to comment. Police from Britain helped set the trap by posing as potential buyers of the famous work, according to news reports in Norway. But few official details of the operation were available on Sunday. "One has been released," was all a Norwegian police spokesman would say, declining comment on the scheme which resulted in the painting being found virtually undamaged at a hotel in south Norway Saturday. Two people have been charged with assisting in the handling of stolen goods, but it is still unclear who actually took the painting from the National Gallery in Oslo.

Amman to seek clarifications

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Qouriea, aware of the Jordanian fears, sought to dispel them by making statements at the time denying that the agreement annulled the Jordan-PLO economic agreement.

"It looks like the Palestinians kept us at bay with an unbending economic agreement until they went and strengthened their hand with the Israel-PLO Paris agreement," economist Fahed Faneh said.

"They feel that they have a stronger bargaining position with this Paris agreement," he said, adding that Jordan "now has the choice of taking it or leaving it."

Another economist, who asked he not be named, said that the PLO move to force Jordan's hand with the Paris agreement and asking Jordan to agree to a "compatible" agreement with it "is an attempt to force us into Benelux-type arrangements."

Benelux, a 1960 agreement creating economic integration between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, is an idea that was floated as an option for a similar arrangement between Jordan, Palestinian territories and Israel.

"The Palestinian negotiator is trying to make the Jordanian decisionmaker consider the idea of economic integration similar to Benelux in terms of making the Jordan-PLO agreement compatible with the Israel-PLO agreement," the economist said.

"It is very clear that the PLO-Israel agreement should

not be used as a pressure card against Jordan," he said.

The Lower House of Parliament's Finance Committee, apparently in response to the fears created by the Paris agreement in economic circles in Jordan, has requested copies of both the Israel-PLO economic agreement and the Jordan-PLO agreement as well as the Oslo and Cairo agreements.

Ali Abul Ragheb, head of the Finance Committee, told the Jordan Times Monday that this request came to "hold the proper discussions with the government and concerned officials and draw a policy that will reflect constructively on the Jordanian and the Palestinian people."

"There is fear that the Jordan-PLO agreement has become a subsidiary agreement to the PLO-Israel agreement," Mr. Abul Ragheb said. "When this appears to be the case, it can only draw suspicion and depression in economic circles," he added.

Mr. Abul Ragheb agreed with Jordanian officials that "proper elaboration of what happened in Paris is needed." Otherwise, he added, "Jordan's mixed economy can only suffer and this will reflect negatively on the people both Palestinian and Jordanian."

"As representatives of the people we cannot sit back and watch," he said, making an appeal that the interest of the people be dealt with "the highest and utmost responsibility and patriotism."

"Otherwise it will reflect negatively on both sides," he said.

U.S. 'fine tuning' almost over

(Continued from page 1)

in light of Jordan's provision of an alternative to the sea-inspection.

The Lower House of Parliament Monday praised what it called the "belated" but "positive" French decision, expressing hope that other countries would follow suit, end the siege on the Red Sea port and compensate the Kingdom for the losses it has incurred from it.

"The (French decision) reflects France's awareness of the correctness of Jordan's policies and the fairness of its demands."

Aqaba Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti said the U.S. decision to end the siege on Aqaba is "a victory for the justness of the

Jordanian demand over the logic of power which was exercised over it."

Mr. Kabariti said the lifting of the siege should be followed by more steps to improve the economic situation in the country because "a stable, moderate and strong Jordan will strengthen the cause of stability in the whole region."

Mr. Kabariti called on the United States to take concrete steps towards realising President Bill Clinton's promise to help write off some of Jordan's foreign debts, hoping the decision to end the sanctions would constitute a first step towards addressing the economic woes of the Kingdom, which, he said, has been in the forefront of forces for moderation in the region.

Israelis clash with waiting crowd

(Continued from page 1)

said. Another three were wounded in clashes at Bureij refugee camp, witnesses said.

The road north from the border was lined with Palestinians queuing for a sight of the vanguard of a 9,000-strong force to maintain order under self-rule as the Israelis redeploy after 27 years of occupation.

PLO officials said 300 men would be in the first contingent who would move into former Israeli bases as the handover of authority got underway, according to the Gaza-Jericho self-rule accord which was signed last Wednesday.

A dozen buses festooned with Palestinian colours were lined up waiting to transport the newcomers.

Correspondents waiting at the border saw several dozen walkie-talkie radios carried through and loaded into a Palestinian car.

A few hundred more policemen were expected to pass through Rafah on Wednesday,

Palestinian officials said.

The Palestinian police opened a liaison office Monday inside the Israeli army's new military headquarters on the Gaza Strip, a PLO official said. The bureau would be manned 24 hours a day to try to settle problems as they arose under autonomy, the official said.

The office overlooks Ganei Tal, a settlement in the main Jewish area of occupation which surrounds the Palestinian town of Khan Yunis. The army shifted there from Gaza City to facilitate their mission to protect Israeli settlers.

Israeli military administration officials at Khan Yunis and Rafah called in local Palestinian dignitaries for a farewell ceremony on Monday. The PLO official said the new police force would soon take over the buildings.

PLO leaders on the Strip earlier met with senior Palestinian employees of the administration to prepare the transfer of civilian authority.

Arafat searches for cabinet

(Continued from page 1)

line Mr. Arafat set during his private talks with Mr. Rabin in Cairo last week to inform him on the composition of the PNA, a senior PLO official said.

Mr. Arafat chaired several PLO Executive Committee

meetings last week, the last of which was on Sunday, to name the PNA but failed to reach a final decision.

He left Tunis on Sunday night to attend South African President Nelson Mandela's inauguration. He is due back on Wednesday.

PLO: Amman accord intact

(Continued from page 1)

The PLO-Israel economic agreement stated that economic cooperation between the two sides "will be governed in various economic spheres by the principles of mutual respect for each other's economic interests, reciprocity, equity and fairness."

PLO officials said the accord gives the PNA the right to exercise its own economic decisions in accordance with its own priorities. At the same time, it recognises the Palestinians' economic ties with other markets, primarily Jordan.

Mr. Huleileh said the PNA would have all powers and responsibilities in the sphere of import and customs policy. The Palestinians will be able to import in quantities that would satisfy the Palestinian market needs.

"We have extracted achievements such as setting up of our own customs lists where we would independently determine rates of customs, purchase tax, levies, excises and other charges, the regulation of licensing requirements and procedures and of standards," he said.

Palestinians, he said, succeeded in getting Israel to agree to Palestinian imports of 500 to 800 products primarily from Jordan as well as from other Arab and Muslim states despite the Arab boycott of Israel.

"During the past three months in the Paris talks, we were negotiating with the Israelis on a list of products to import which Jordan presented to us, and the annexes of the accord includes Jordanian official papers with items listed by Jordan," Huleileh said.

He said the value of materials produced in Jordan, plus the direct processing costs, should not fall short of 30 per cent of the export value of the goods.

One of the most important Palestinian achievements was in the monetary and financial sector, he said.

"We have succeeded in getting Israel to accept the establishment of a Palestinian

monetary authority (PMA) which will have all the powers and responsibilities for the regulation and implementation of the monetary policies," Mr. Huleileh said.

This, he said, did not contradict the Jordan-PLO economic accord, which stated that "the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) is the body authorised by both sides to organise the reopening of branches (of Jordanian banks closed in 1967) and the monitoring of their activities... This agreement would continue to be valid until the Palestinian Monetary Authority is established."

But some PLO officials contend that following the PLO-Israel accord, Jordanian officials tried to convince the PLO of the disadvantages of setting up a Palestinian monetary authority, and instead to have the CBJ monitor and supervise monetary policy in the occupied territories. Some officials suggested joint Palestinian-Jordanian supervision of monetary policy, but PLO officials said the fact that they would be able to establish their own central bank was an achievement.

The Jordan-PLO economic accord was signed after months of delay by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, which prompted His Majesty King Hussein to issue a last minute warning to the PLO to coordinate with the Kingdom before it was too late to save the PLO from isolating itself from the rest of the Arab World. The PLO signed the accord after negotiating three drafts. Some PLO officials charged Jordan was trying to "dominate" the Palestinian economy despite repeated denials by Jordanian officials.

Since the PMA was to be set up with powers of a central bank, one PLO official said, there was need for detailing the economic accord with Jordan. Mr. Huleileh said that once the PMA is established, banks operating in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will have to obtain licences from that authority. These banks will be

required to comply with the general rules and regulations of the PMA concerning foreign banks, he said.

Some Jordanian bank branches which were closed after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war have already opened in the West Bank in line with a Jordanian-Israeli accord. When Jordan initiated the memorandum of understanding with Israel concerning the reopening of bank branches in the West Bank, the PLO thought Jordan neglected the Palestinian authority in the occupied territories and bypassed the PLO as the political power there, Palestinian officials say. Now, Palestinians expect Jordanian bank branches, coming under Palestinian jurisdiction, to relinquish branches with the PMA and to comply with its regulations.

In the PLO-Israel accord, Israel and the PLO would continue to discuss the possibility of introducing mutually agreed Palestinian currency or temporary alternative currency arrangements for the Palestinian authority.

Since the Jordan-PLO accord stated that the Jordanian dinar will continue to be used in Palestine until the Palestinian currency is issued, in addition to the utilisation of other international and Arab currencies, this should be a point to be discussed with Jordan, Mr. Huleileh said.

Some Jordanian officials interpreted this article as meaning that the dinar would continue to be the only major legal tender in the occupied territories, and not to be used alongside the Israeli shekel, but PLO officials said when they drafted the Jordan-PLO accord, they considered the shekel as an international currency that was widely used in the territories, and since their dealings with Israelis were in shekels, it was not possible to consider the dinar the only legal tender.

"We are still not sovereign, and Jordan knows that quite well. What we achieved in the PLO-Israel economic accord were the first steps towards separation," Mr. Huleileh said.

A senior PLO official said that Jordan wanted Palesti-

nians to import Jordanian goods worth \$300 million. "The total value of our exports to the outside world, Jordan included, is \$350 million and if we import goods worth \$300 million from Jordan, what economic benefits would we reap? We would not be able to improve our economy nor make the balance."

The current list of goods to be imported from Jordan, he said, offsets and hurts Israeli exports to the Palestinian market.

The official, who insisted on anonymity, said that Jordan and the Palestinian entity could work together to enhance the interests of both sides.

"Our work should be compatible, and Jordan must deal with Palestinians on the basis of mutual respect, equity and in ways which would achieve interests of both sides," he said.

"We have started the process of breaking economic ties with Israel, and we wish to weave closer economic links with Jordan, but not on the basis of the interests of one party or the domination of the stronger economy. Instead the relationship should be one of compatibility," he said.

In Tuesday's economic negotiations, Palestinians would want answers to queries such as:

— Would Jordan comply with the PMA's regulations and policies concerning reopening Jordanian bank branches in territories under Palestinian jurisdiction?

— Would Jordan set a mechanism, as Israel did, to convert the dinar into foreign currency?

— How would Jordan react if Palestinians decided to use the U.S. dollar as the legal tender in the Palestinian territories?

— If Palestinians received financial aid in foreign currency through Jordanian banks, would the Kingdom give Palestinians these funds in hard currency or convert it to dinars, taking into consideration that Israel accepted to transfer such aid in hard currency to Palestinians?

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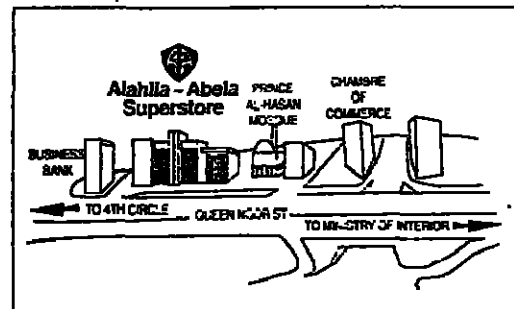
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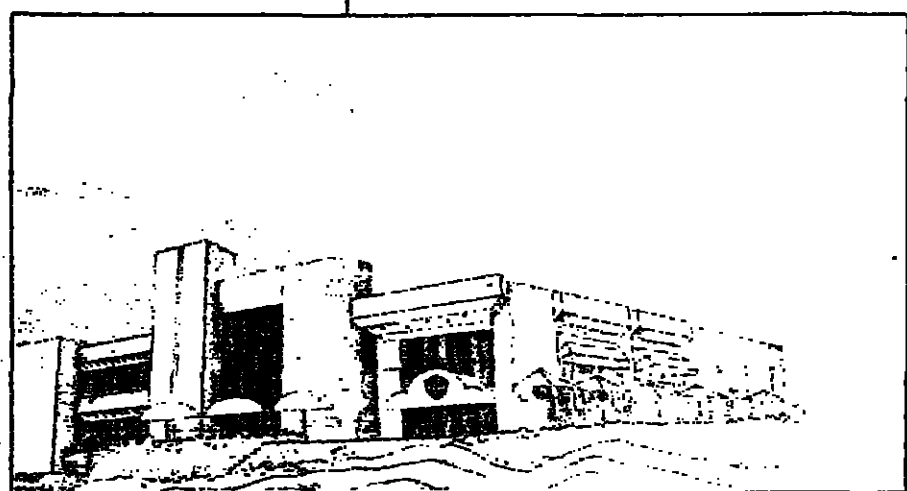
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran to deport whipped U.S. woman

TEHRAN (AFP) — An American woman whipped in Iran for "looking drunk" in public is to be deported after all, a Tehran newspaper said Monday. Mary Jones, 35, was picked up two weeks ago in northern Tehran allegedly in a drunken state. She was given 80 lashes of the whip after being found guilty in a court of "promoting corruption." Resalat daily said Ms. Jones, said to be from Texas, was presently being held at the Interior Ministry awaiting deportation. The report came after another daily, Kayhan, said Sunday that Ms. Jones, here since 1983, had said she would not leave because she married in Iran and had Iranian citizenship. It added that the Interior Ministry had confirmed Ms. Jones' Iranian citizenship, "even though she was born in the United States." On Saturday, Kayhan charged that Ms. Jones came to Iran with "the aim of corrupting the young" and accused her of promoting prostitution. According to newspapers here, Ms. Jones had two children but was now divorced. She was said to be working as an assistant film director.

Two wounded in Egyptian gunfight

ASSUIT (AP) — Gunmen ambushed two policemen walking to work in southern Egypt on Monday, and two bystanders were seriously wounded in an ensuing gunfight, authorities said. Three assailants were described as men in their early 20s wearing "European clothes." They escaped on foot. The shootout occurred in Sidfa, the scene of previous extremist attacks on police and a Nile tourist boat in troubled Assuit province. Sidfa is south of the city of Assuit, the provincial capital, which is 300 kilometres south of Cairo. Security officers said the policemen returned the fire. The bystanders, Ernest Batarus, 48, and Fuad Zakariya, 38, were reported wounded as they tried to help the policemen. The men were listed in critical condition at Sidfa hospital. Nobody immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. But the Assuit area is a centre of activity by radical groups in a violent campaign to replace Egypt's largely secular government with a fundamentalist Islamic one.

Oldest paved road discovered in Egypt

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Two U.S. geologists have accidentally discovered a 4,600-year-old paved in Egypt, making it the world's oldest, U.S. newspapers said. Thomas Brown and James Harrell of the University of Toledo will report their discovery Friday at the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America, according to the Washington Post, the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times. About 12 kilometres long and two metres wide, the road linked a basalt quarry in the desert to waterways that carried basalt blocks down the Nile to sites of ancient monuments. Made of sandstone and limestone, the road was discovered in the Faiyum Depression about 72 kilometres southwest of Cairo while the geologists were mapping the area. Although it now appears to go nowhere in the desert, the road led to a quay 20 metres above sea level on Lake Moeris, whose waters were fed by the Nile. Birket Qarun, another lake, is now at the bottom of the depression about 50 metres below sea level, an indication in the change of climate conditions in the region.

Dissidents arrested in Beijing, Shanghai

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese police have arrested four more dissidents, including Zhai Weimin, a former student leader in the 1989 pro-democracy movement, dissident sources said Monday. The arrests brought to five the number of activists detained in less than a month, ahead of his fifth anniversary of the brutal crushing of the pro-democracy campaign at Beijing's Tiananmen Square, they said. "Zhai Weimin was detained by police on April 23, and we have had no word of him since then," a friend of Mr. Zhai's said here. Mr. Zhai, 23, had been arrested in Beijing in early March, and was then imprisoned in his home province of Henan, in central China. He had returned to the capital in late March. In Shanghai, Yang Zhou, spokesman of the Chinese Association for Human Rights, said that three local dissidents had been detained last week, including a painter, Lin Muchen, who was about to board a plane for the United States.

U.S. serial killer faces execution

CHICAGO (R) — The hour of execution of John Wayne Gacy, the man convicted of more murders than any serial killer in U.S. history, drew near Monday as lawyers worked frantically to postpone his date with death. "I will go to my death knowing what I know," said the 52-year-old Gacy in a sometimes cryptic telephone interview broadcast Sunday night by WBBM-TV in Chicago. Asked what his final thoughts were in advance of his scheduled death by lethal injection at 12:01 a.m. CDT (1:01 GMT) Tuesday, Gacy said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. I will be at peace...if you're at peace with your God...you have nothing to fear but fear itself." Gacy was convicted of killing 33 young men and boys in a sex and torture spree during the 1970s. Most of his victims were found buried in a crawl space under his suburban Chicago house. Eight of them have never been identified. Gacy's lawyers, who have lost appeal after appeal, said they planned to file another motion in federal court and perhaps make a last-minute plea for mercy to the U.S. Supreme Court.

N. Zealand under fire over migrant

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand's immigration minister came under heavy fire on Monday for allowing an alleged South African white supremacist to come and live in the country. Self-styled anti-racist campaigners denounced the minister, Roger Maxwell, after his department granted residence to Jan Smith, described as an ex-leader of a white racist organisation called the Church of the Creator. "You are incompetent," Dick Cuthbert of the protest group Stop White South Africans Today (SWAT) told Mr. Maxwell in a television link-up. "You have not run your department properly...this man must be told by you personally he must leave." Prime Minister Jim Bolger waded into the controversy, telling television reporters before flying to attend Nelson Mandela's inauguration as South African president: "I don't want white supremacists coming to New Zealand."

Japan's opposition close ranks

TOKYO (AFP) — A top Japanese socialist leader said Monday his party team up with its long-time conservative foe, the Liberal Democrat Party (LDP), in fighting Japan's fragile coalition government. Social Democratic Party (SDP) Chairman Tomiichi Murayama said his party had quit the ruling coalition because of a "high-handed nature" which emphasised its numerical strength. He also told a meeting with provincial SDP officials: "We'll have no choice but to work in flexible cooperation (with the LDP) to carry through our political strategy." The SDP left the coalition when a rival political bloc, dominated by the Japan Renewal Party of Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata, was created following his election as prime minister last month. The SDP's pullout has resulted in Japan's first minority government in 39 years.

Elderly woman killed in N. Ireland attack

BELFAST (R) — An elderly Catholic woman was shot dead by suspected Protestant guerrillas at her house in an isolated rural area of Northern Ireland, police said on Monday. A police spokesman said Roseanne Mallon, 76, was killed on Sunday night when shots were fired through a window of the house near the town of Dungannon, about 60 kilometres west of Belfast. Mallon was watching television with her 60-year-old sister-in-law when the attack took place. The sister-in-law was not wounded but was reported to be suffering from severe shock. A police spokesman said three men were arrested and were being questioned about the murder which police suspect was carried out by Protestant gunmen. A senior police officer described the attack as "a foul sectarian murder."

Political crisis hits Lebanese government

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanon faced a political crisis on Monday as Prime Minister Rafik Hariri sulked at home after his attempts to broaden the Christian membership in his cabinet were thwarted.

He has decided to boycott government meetings and ordered the postponement of Wednesday's weekly cabinet session after plans for a reshuffle to include more Christian figures were opposed by president Elias Hrawi, himself a Christian, and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a Shiite Muslim.

Visits by all three to Damascus, the key power broker in Lebanon, failed to end the dispute.

A source close to Mr. Hariri, who is a Sunni Muslim, however, said he was not resigning while the press here warned that if he should step down Lebanon's credibility and post-war economic revival could be jeopardised.

The billionaire prime minister's appointment in October 1992 and his plans for an ambitious \$10-to-\$12 billion to rebuild war-shattered Lebanon have been a key element in renewing Western and Arab confidence and investment in Lebanon.

But his 30-member Syrian-backed government, made up equally of Christian and Muslim ministers, has failed to enjoy the trust of many Lebanese political and religious leaders.

The situation has been exacerbated with the recent arrests of dozens of former Christian militiamen, including



Elias Hrawi

former warlord Samir Geagea, in connection with a February church bombing and a 1991 political killing.

Informed sources said the reshuffle proposed by Mr. Hariri would add four ministers to his cabinet and would include Christian opposition figures in a bid to give the government more credibility.

It would include representatives of the main right-wing Christian party, the Falange, as well as the National Bloc which is led by Raymond Edde, a former cabinet minister who went into self-exile in France 18 years ago.

A number of veteran Christian politicians — such as Lebanon's former envoy to the United Nations Ghassan Tueni and former Ambassador to Washington Nassib Lahud — could be brought into a modified cabinet, the sources said.

Faruk Abillama, a supporter of exiled rebel General Michel



Rafik Hariri

Aoun, also could be considered for a portfolio, the sources added.

The Christians, who consider themselves the losers of the 1975-1990 civil war, boycotted 1992 parliamentary elections and the community has been weakened by the voluntary immigration of thousands of its sons.

The reshuffle would "consolidate the domestic front at a time when Lebanon is confronted by delicate developments at home and regionally," one source said.

"It would also put an end to interference by private parties who are blocking the work of the executive branch, namely its efforts to carry out administrative reform," the source added.

But Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Berri are opposed to the changes proposed by Mr. Hariri.

Mr. Berri wants the finance ministry, which is controlled by



Nabih Berri

a Sunni ally of Mr. Hariri, handed over to a Shiite whom he would choose. Mr. Hrawi meanwhile wants his own Christian allies brought into the cabinet.

Last August Mr. Hariri threatened to step down citing resistance among the cabinet to his post-war reconstruction policies.

Detractors of the prime minister have frequently accused him of preferring business to politics and giving priority to reconstruction projects before social issues.

Intervention by Syria, which deploys some 35,000 troops in Lebanon, contained the summer crisis and observers here expect Damascus to step in one more time to find a solution to the latest confrontation here.

"We understand Mr. Hariri's desire to reinforce Christian representation (in the cabinet). It shows he is sensitive to popular demands," the re-

spected Al-Nahar newspaper wrote on Monday.

But it urged Mr. Hariri to outline his position publicly rather than in Damascus, where he reportedly held consultations with Syrian officials overnight Saturday.

"I am ready to resign, I miss my children," the left-wing daily Al Safir quoted Mr. Hariri as telling mediators.

Mr. Hariri held talks with Mr. Hrawi Saturday and then visited Damascus to discuss details of the reshuffle with Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, officials said.

He went on strike when he found on his return that Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Berri were blocking his suggestions.

The sources said several ministers were mediating between the two leaders.

Mr. Hariri said through a senior aide Sunday he would be staying at his posh residence in Beirut's Koreiteh neighbourhood pending a settlement of the dispute.

"He's staying at home until further notice. He has cancelled all official appointments and the regular weekly cabinet meeting on Wednesday. He is in no mood for compromise," said the aide, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Soon after Mr. Hariri's announcement, streams of well-wishers and would-be mediators from within and without government converged on his residence to try to talk him out of his decision.

Mr. Hariri also cancelled a planned televised news conference Sunday night.

COLUMN

Clintons learn the high cost of scandal

NEW YORK (R) — President Bill Clinton's aides said his legal bills total between \$250,000 and \$500,000, according to Time magazine. The latest issue of the weekly news-magazine reported the Clintons, who have been employing lawyer David Kendall for about four months to work on the Whitewater affair, can expect to see their legal bills go higher after hiring lawyer Robert Bennett to defend the president against sexual harassment charges. Time said the first couple's worth was estimated to be just under \$1 million. Aides told the magazine the Clintons have not authorised anyone to start raising funds privately to pay for their mounting legal bills.

2 Vietnamese held on 'slavery' charge

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand police said Monday they had arrested two Vietnamese men on charges of keeping Thai women as slaves in brothels and massage parlours. Detective Senior Sergeant Phil Jones said the arrests following police questioning of 18 Thai women and three Vietnamese men after raids in the northern city of Auckland. "We arrested one Thai woman for soliciting. We arrested two Vietnamese men for slavery and brothel-keeping, and one Vietnamese man for just brothel-keeping," he said. Sgt. Jones said slavery was defined as selling, bartering, letting or hiring another person, and carried a possible jail term of 14 years. He said by telephone from Auckland the raids followed a complaint by a Thai woman who said she had been kept as a slave but escaped. Two of the other Thai women questioned had made similar allegations. One of the two premises raided had a number of hidden rooms behind false walls, Sgt. Jones said. He declined to give details of the circumstances in which the women were held. The Vietnamese men were being held at an Auckland prison. They appeared briefly in court at the weekend and were due to appear again Tuesday.

Norwegian reaches peak of Everest for unique triple

OSLO (R) — Norwegian explorer Erling Kagge completed a unique triple Monday by reaching the top of Mount Everest, the world's highest peak, after walking to both the North and South Poles. "He was totally exhausted but very happy, and cried a little," said Mr. Kagge's spokesman, Hans Christian Erlandsen, after Kagge radioed from the 8,848 metre (29,028 feet) summit which he reached in a New Zealand-led guided expedition. Mr. Kagge, a 31-year-old lawyer from Oslo, became the first person to walk alone on skis to the South Pole last year without outside help and skied with fellow Norwegian Boerge Ousland to the North Pole in 1990. He rated the top of Everest as a third "pole" — the most extreme point on the world's surface alongside the North and South Poles. "He's the only person who's walked to all three," Mr. Erlandsen said. New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary, who was first to the summit of Everest in 1953 with Tenzing Norgay, travelled by snowmobile to the South Pole and by plane to the North Pole. "Hillary is the only other person we know of who has even been to both poles and the top of Everest," Mr. Erlandsen said. Mr. Kagge was part of an Everest expedition of about 10 people climbing from the Nepalese side including Americans, Germans and Nepalese sherpas.

Deng's thinking is still very clear at 89

HONG KONG (AP) — Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, at 89, "is very clear," his brother was quoted Monday as saying. "He is very healthy," Deng Ken told Hong Kong newspapers after arriving Sunday on a private sightseeing visit. Like his older brother, Mr. Deng holds no public office. But where Deng Xiaoping continues to wield supreme influence in China, the younger Deng is little-known. Some papers have said he was 83.

Arafat aide allowed home; but family members denied entry

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The man expected to take charge of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's office in autonomous Jericho crossed the King Hussein Bridge to the West Bank on Monday.

Najib Ahmad, whose name was in a list of 15 Palestinian expellees allowed to return home by the Israelis last week, had held back his departure to gather his family members, eight sons and a daughter, to travel with him into the West Bank.

On Monday, the occupation authorities allowed Mr. Ahmad to enter, but refused to permit others to accompany him, PLO officials said.

After some arguments and negotiations, the Israeli border officials gave a one-month entry permit to Mr. Ahmad's daughter, Dumia, they said. Mr. Ahmad had his permanent residency papers in the occupied territories renewed, they said.

Abdul Aziz Duweiri, Mr. Ahmad's son-in-law, was quoted as saying that the permission of his wife was given on "humanitarian grounds" because Mr. Ahmad, 72, "needed someone to look after him."

All others in the 22-member group, including Azzam Ahmad, Mr. Ahmad's son who is the PLO representative in Baghdad, returned to Amman. Contacts were under way with the PLO leadership in Tunis to sort out the matter, the officials said.

Other members of the Ahmad family are also prominent members and activists in

the PLO.

It was not immediately clear why the occupation authorities denied permission to the family. Some reports said they cited the absence of a "family reunification" document as the reason while others said the Israeli version of permits for Palestinian expellees only applied to the person directly concerned and dependents under the age of 21.

It would mean separate applications for every member of the family over 21.

Mr. Ahmad, a native of the West Bank town of Jenin, was expelled in 1969, two years after Israel seized the territory in war.

Mr. Ahmad has been the head of Mr. Arafat's Amman office for more than 14 years. He is a member of the Palestine National Council and the Palestine Central Council.

He served in the Jordanian parliament for four consecutive terms in the 50s and 60s. Before he left Jordan, Mr. Ahmad told reporters that he would continue to serve as head of Mr. Arafat's office in Jericho, where the PLO chairman is expected to set up headquarters to run Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank town as well as the Gaza Strip.

Since the beginning of the Middle East peace process in 1991, Israel has allowed the return home of nearly 150 Palestinians it expelled from the occupied territories since 1967.

In addition, another 30 Palestinians who fled the occupied territories to evade arrest after the intifada began in December 1987 have also been allowed to return home.

'Fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan kill 2,800'

TEHRAN (AFP) — At least 2,800 people have died in heavy fighting between rival Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said Monday.

IRNA, quoting Kurdish officials, said an all-out battle had broken out Saturday between three factions in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, following two weeks of sporadic clashes.

There was no immediate confirmation of the report.

The fighting continued Monday in several areas despite an agreement signed by the two most powerful factions, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), IRNA said, quoting KDP officials. Some 800 civilians, including women and children, were among those killed in the fighting, which had caused millions of dollars worth of damage to public facilities, it said.

The regions of Sulaymaniyah and Rawandiz, close to the Iranian border, appear to have been the worst affected.

A source in Iranian Kurdistan told AFP that the pro-Iranian Kurdistan Islamic League (KIL) had formed an alliance with the KDP against the PUK, which rules Iraqi Kurdistan in tandem with the KDP in defiance of Baghdad.

However, a KDP official in Tehran contacted by AFP denied any alliance with the KIL against the PUK of Jalal Talabani.

Another KDP source, quoted by IRNA, charged Sunday that the fighting had been initiated by the PUK to "disrupt parliamentary elections," planned for mid-May.

They also fought for a short spell with the Afghan resistance groups before returning home in 1990 following the end of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Sometime in 1993, the two met and decided to set up a religious organisation against what they saw as violations of Islamic teachings. They wanted to brand the regime "un-Islamic" and their ultimate objective was to set up an Islamic state in Jordan.

They planned to include in their campaign assassination of important people, both civilian and military, economists, scholars and intellectuals, bombing the Parliament building, "because it is the place where laws contrary to the Holy Koran are endorsed," and attacks on cinema houses and liquor stores.

Women who do not wear the hijab were "un-Islamic" and could be considered as "spoils of war," just as money robbed from non-Muslims since they do not pay jizya (tax), according to a "fatwa" issued by the second suspect.

Hamas leader opposes shedding 'innocent blood'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The leader of the main Palestinian group opposing the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord has said he opposed attacking Israeli innocents and any violence against the PLO, according to an Israeli lawmaker who visited him in prison.

Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the ailing leader of Hamas, said "as long there is occupation, (Hamas) has a right to oppose it, but that does not include shedding innocent blood," Taleb Al Sana told Israeli army radio.

Asked what he meant by innocents, Mr. Sana quoted Sheikh Yassin as saying, "opposing the occupier is legitimate, the soldiers who carry out the occupation."

That would appear to count out operations like two April suicide bomb attacks which left 13 Israelis dead, mostly civilians.

The Hamas is opposed to the PLO-Israeli accord introducing limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, but has hinted it will cooperate with the PLO once the autonomy is in place.

Mr. Sana, who represents the Arab Democratic Party in the Israeli parliament, said Mr. Sana would function as a non-violent opposition to the PLO in the autonomy.

"The Hamas express its opposition in a civilised way, just like there is an opposition in Israel," Mr. Sana said.

Hamas spokesman have said they oppose the peace agreement because it leaves out issues like the rest of the West Bank and Jerusalem. But they have, at other times, said that they will settle for nothing less than the destruction of Israel.

Mr. Sana also said the sheikh refuses to call upon his

supporters to give up the armed struggle against Israel in return for his release from prison.

The sheikh said Hamas would "not use force against the PLO" to block implementation of the accord, Mr. Sana said.

The sheikh said he wanted "a just peace between Israel and the Palestinians, including the right of return (of Palestinian refugees), the dismantling of all Jewish settlements and a solution to Jerusalem."

Before meeting the sheikh on Sunday, Mr. Sana held talks with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who proposed freeing the Hamas founder on condition that he called on his group to "halt terrorist acts."

Mr. Sana said Sheikh Yassin's health was deteriorating and called on the Israeli government to free him.

"His hands and feet are paralysed and he has defective sight and hearing," Mr. Sana said, adding that his release would have "a positive impact on the peace process."

Military officials quoted by an Israeli newspaper said Monday that one in every five Palestinian detainees refused to renounce violence in exchange for freedom.

Israeli authorities insist that every prisoner due to be released under the self-rule deal must "pledge to refrain from any acts of terrorism or violence," Maariv noted.

On Friday, Israel announced it was suspending the release of Palestinian prisoners until further notice. More than 1,000 out of 2,500 due to be released were freed last week.

Under the accord for the launch of self-rule signed in Cairo last Wednesday, 5,000 Palestinian prisoners are to be released within five weeks of the signing, out of some 10,000 held by Israel.

They tried to repeat the modus operandi with another taxi on Jan. 1, they were thwarted by the alert driver, who escaped from the car with his keys despite being hit and raised help.

The two managed to flee the scene after opening fire and wounding one man who tried to stop them.

A short while later, the suspect detained in Saudi Arabia was released and he returned to Jordan. The trio decided to expand their operations by enlisting others.

Four others were recruited. On Feb. 2, the gang rented a car to carry out another robbery with the participation of two of the new recruits, but the key members were arrested in the car along with the gun, tear-gas canisters and metal instruments, presumably to be used in attacks.

Subsequently, all the seven were detained. During interrogation, they confessed to the crimes and revealed the details of how each hold-up was conducted.

Security court prosecutor turns down 'Afghan' group hold-up case

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The prosecutor-general of the State Security Court has turned down a case involving seven suspects in a series of hold-ups after finding that the crimes involved were not under the jurisdiction of the State Security Court, sources said Monday. The case is expected to be tried in a regular criminal court.

The sources confirmed reports in the local press which identified the seven as members of the so-called Jordanian Afghan group, comprising of some Jordanians who fought alongside the Mujahideen in Afghanistan against the Soviet intervention in the country which ended in 1990.

They said the State Security Court decided that although evidence and statements by the seven showed reasonable grounds for a case against them, the crimes were not of a nature that would be tried by the State Security Court, which, by definition, is a special court which handles capital

offences.

According to a published account, the prosecutor general found that the facts in the case did not substantiate the first charge against the seven — "plotting to commit terrorist acts" — but only showed "crimes conducted with the intent to get financial gains," and hence the decision to turn it down with a recommendation that the case be tried by the concerned court.

The seven suspects are not linked with 35 others who remain in detention pending trial on terrorism and subversion charges following a series of bombings and bombing attempts in Amman and Zarqa early this year, the sources said.

The sources confirmed an account of the cases involving the seven carried in the Al Rai Arabic-language newspaper. A summary of the case, as Al Rai reported citing official papers, runs as under:

Two of the suspects, one 33 and the other 37, went to Afghanistan in 1989 and got trained in use of weapons.

They also fought for a short spell with the Afghan resistance groups before returning home in 1990 following the end of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Sometime in 1993, the two met and decided to set up a religious organisation against what they saw as violations of Islamic teachings. They wanted to brand the regime "un-Islamic" and their ultimate objective was to set up an Islamic state in Jordan.

They planned to include in their campaign assassination of important people, both civilian and military, economists, scholars and intellectuals, bombing the Parliament building, "because it is the place where laws contrary to the Holy Koran are endorsed," and attacks on cinema houses and liquor stores.

Women who do not wear the hijab were "un-Islamic" and could be considered as "spoils of war," just as money robbed from non-Muslims since they do not pay jizya (tax), according to a "fatwa" issued by the second suspect.

Subsequently, a third suspect, a 27-year-old, was enlisted by the two.

In mid-November, the 37-year-old suspect went to Saudi Arabia, but was arrested there. The report did not make clear why he was detained.

In the meantime, the other two plotted to carry out robberies and holdups to finance the organisation and also to attack police patrols to secure weapons. Among the targets were an Arab Bank branch in Umm Al Summak and a jewelry store in Fuheis.

They bought a gun and tear-gas canisters for JD 400. Between Dec. 17 and Feb. 2, when they were arrested by the crime investigation department, they held up a supermarket in Shmeisani and a grocery in Jabal Hussein.

The supermarket yielded JD 23 and the grocery JD 12.

In both hold-ups they used tear-gas to flee the scene.

On Dec. 19, the two also robbed a taxidriver of JD 8 at gunpoint after taking the taxi to an isolated area in Tabarbour in Amman's suburbs and

fled with the vehicle. But when they tried to repeat the modus operandi with another taxi on Jan. 1, they were thwarted by the alert driver, who escaped from the car with his keys despite being hit and raised help.

The two managed to flee the scene after opening fire and wounding one man who tried to stop them.

A short while later, the suspect detained in Saudi Arabia was released and he returned to Jordan. The trio decided to expand their operations by enlisting others.

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